A

PICTURESQUE TOUR

THROUGH PART OF

EUROPE, ASIA,

AND

AFRICA.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A

PICTURESQUE TOUR

THROUGH PART OF

EUROPE, ASIA, and AFRICA:

CONTAINING

MANY NEW REMARKS

ON THE

PRESENT STATE OF SOCIETY,
REMAINS OF ANCIENT EDIFICES, &c.

WITH PLATES,

AFTER DESIGNS

BY JAMES STUART, ESQ. F.R.S. AND F.A.S.

AND AUTHOR OF THE ANTIQUITIES OF ATHENS.

WRITTEN BY AN ITALIAN GENTLEMAN.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

A

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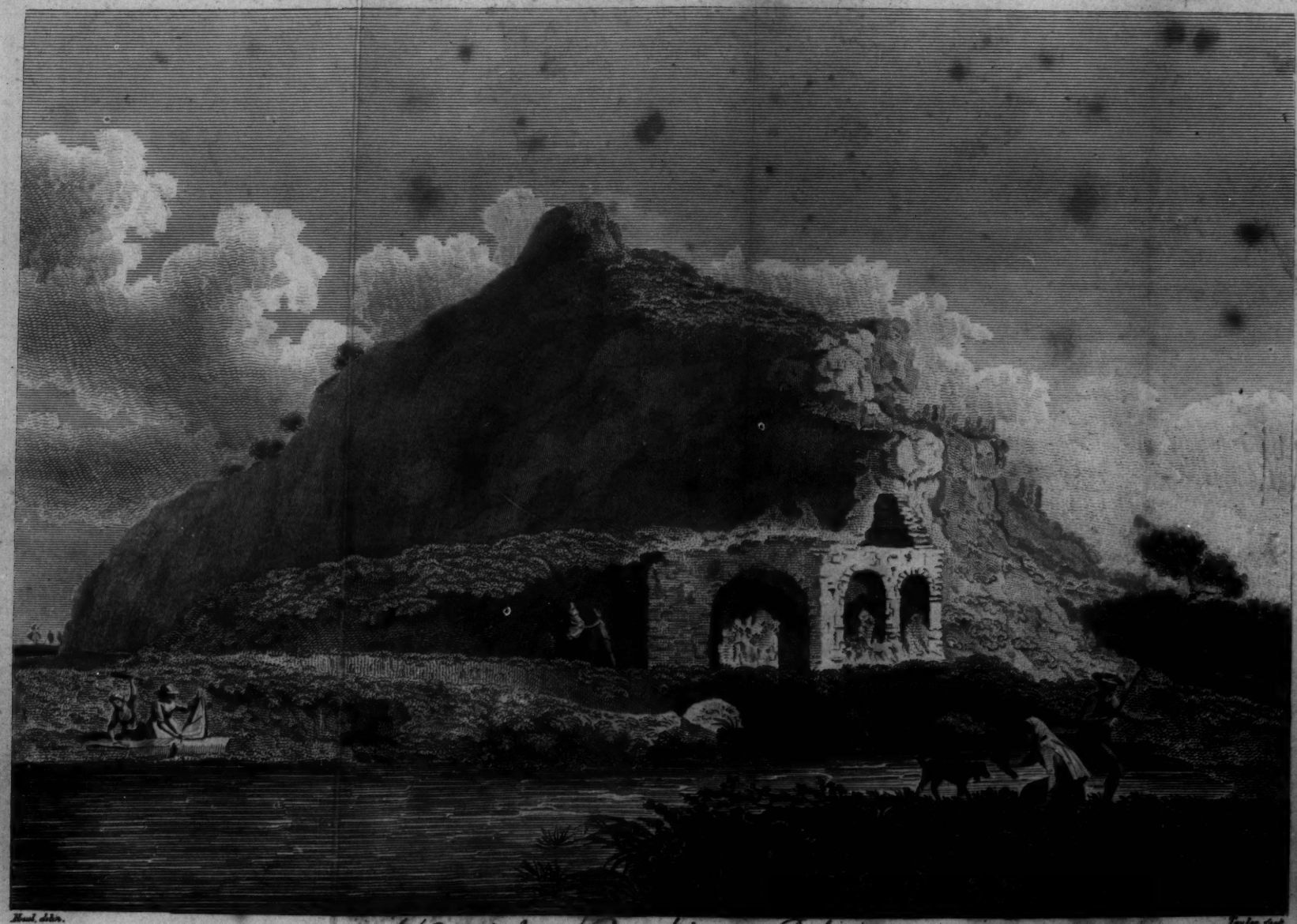

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A View of the Naumachie at Palermo.

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LETTERS

ON VARIOUS PARTS OF

EUROPE, ASIA, AND AFRICA.

LETTER I.

Palermo, April 29, 1788.

WE arrived here four days ago. My want of acquaintance in the place, is in ſome ſort compenſated by the pleaſure which novelty inſpires. How do I regret being unable to ſhare it with you!

This capital of Sicily, which is bordered by the Tyrrhene Sea, is ſituated at the foot of a chain of mountains which form an amphitheatre around it, and ſupply the city with a plenty of clear and ſalubrious water. As the outſide view of the place is far from prepoſſeſſing, the traveller feels an

agreeable ſurpriſe to find it, on a cloſer inſpection, a beautiful, extenſive, and well peopled town; containing, within the circuit of ſix miles, 100,000 inhabitants. Two large ſtreets, the *Caſſero* and the *Strada Nuova*, each a mile long, and which interſect each other at right angles, divide the town into four parts, correſponding with the four principal gates. Theſe ſtreets have the advantage of a foot-path, are well paved, and light at night, and are decorated with ſplendid buildings. The centre where they meet forms a beautiful octagon, called the Piazza Villena, each ſide of which preſents a beautiful aſſemblage of the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian orders, a fountain, and three ſtatues. A ſimilar coup d'œil is not to be met with in any other city in Europe.

The public places, ſtatues, obeliſks, and fountains, are not amongſt the objects moſt worthy of notice. The Prætor's fountain, however, from its deſign, the beauty of its marble, the great number of animals, monſters, and ſtatues with which it is adorned, the diſpoſition of its baluſtrade, and the extent of its circumference, which is 515 feet, paſſes among the connoiſſeurs for a chef d'œuvre of art. The churches are enriched with porphyry, precious ſtones, and gold and ſilver plate, and are ornamented with the moſt beautiful marble, eſpecially alabaſter, which nature, who has dealt moſt bountifully with this iſland, has ſupplied it with in abundance. The architecture of ſome is excellent, and in ſeveral are to be ſeen the paintings of the firſt Italian maſters. As this climate is calculated to inſpire indolence and devotion, you will

will not think it extraordinary that here are no leſs than eighty nunneries and convents. From a like cauſe, too, the people are very humane and charitable; the city affording many public monuments of the benevolence of its inhabitants, as it contains ſeven hoſpitals, and a general aſylum for the poor.

What a charming country! Nature has laviſhed on it her choiceſt gifts, which art and induſtry have united to cultivate and improve.

In what terms am I to deſcribe the public promenade, called the Flora? The name itſelf expreſſes much, but it does not convey enough. It is a garden ſituated out of the town on the banks of the ſea, wherein the enchantments of that of Armida ſeem in ſort to be realized, ſince every gloomy idea vaniſhes the moment you enter it. Here rows of orange trees, formed into walks, exhale the moſt delicious perfume; while arbours, impenetrable to the rays of the ſun, and through whoſe cool receſſes the fragrant jeſſamine expands its ſweets, ſeem formed to indulge in pleaſing reveries, or for the enjoyment of that tender melancholy which is ſometimes the greateſt of pleaſures.

In other parts are ſpouting fountains, and ponds gay with the varied luſtre of thoſe golden fiſh which the new world ſupplies to the luxury of the old: the murmur of the waters, the warbling of the amorous choriſters, the rich variety of the flowers, whoſe delicious eſſence is wafted by the gentle zephyr through the ſurrounding atmoſphere, and the nymphs

who walk there, all contribute to inſpire with voluptuouſneſs the odoriferous air of this delightful ſpot.

Summer, more eſpecially, is the ſeaſon when the inhabitants of Palermo frequent this promenade. When the ſun, departing from the weſtern horizon, remits his ſcorching rays, hither they reſort in crowds to enjoy the refreſhing breeze, and join the melody of the love-ſick tale to the dying murmurs of the waves expiring on the coaſt; ſoftening the obduracy of the fair, and yielding to all thoſe ſweet and innocent emotions which the preſence of thoſe we love always excites. The ſhades of night quickly ſeem to diſperſe, to make way for artificial day, which, in the Flora, appears in a thouſand varied ſhapes. Then is ſeen a promiſcuous aſſembly of people, without diſtinction of age, or ſex, or rank, joy expreſſed in every face; while many a petty crime againſt amorous fidelity eſcapes the wandering eye. The charms of muſic now ſucceed, and the ſighs of lovers are loſt in the harmony of clarionets, hautboys, flutes, and violins.

Out of the town, and but a little way from the Flora, is a ſpot, whither numbers of people, from time to time, are drawn together. Beneath the church of a Capuchin convent are to be ſeen a thouſand of our fellow-creatures, who ſeem all perfectly content with their lot; theſe are deceaſed perſons, placed upright in niches. Some of them which have been depoſited there upwards of a hundred years, are in ſuch a ſtate of preſervation, that, to judge of them from the freſhneſs of their beards and ſkin, they would not ſeem to have taken up

their abode there above a week. At the ſight of ſuch objects, a melancholy ſenſation is felt by the ſpectator, which he is unable to repreſs. It is the more painful, as it mortifies his vanity by deſtroying thoſe chimerical ideas of felicity, and magnificent projects of greatneſs, which imagination delights to form. I experienced it in common with the reſt; but, when its firſt effect was paſt, I found myſelf capable of contemplating theſe ſpectres at leiſure, and unmoved. Some there were that ſtruck me with horror; others again excited laughter, and ſeemed themſelves to laugh "in "their ſleep." From all, however, might be gathered this leſſon: that ſince we are here but to look around us, then to fall and mingle our aſhes with thoſe who have gone before, we ought to enjoy, while we can, that life whoſe component particles are thus fugitive and tranſitory; nor ought we ever to forget that virtue is our higheſt duty and moſt exalted pleaſure.

LETTER II.

Palermo, May 2, 1788.

I WENT laſt night to the theatre, from which I did not return greatly edified. As there is no opera at preſent, the people here amuſe themſelves in going to ſee Punchinello. A great number of ladies were preſent. Punch uttered a number of ſilly jeſts and obſcene *doubles entendres*. The ladies laughed more than any body; and, for my own part, I bluſhed for them. What ſeems extraordinary is, that, after permitting their modeſty to be daily hurt at ſuch-like exhibitions, their infidelity ſhould be wondered at. True it is, that they are naturally of an amorous complexion; the climate, in conjunction with the ſulphur of Ætna, operating upon them very powerfully: but, for this very reaſon, either every moral cauſe which may promote this effect ſhould be removed, or its conſequence ought not to be complained of. Inſtead of this, the women are watched, confined, reproved; and the men have the effrontery even to affect ſurpriſe at their being no better. How many huſbands are there here, who, after the example of the Romans, would erect temples to Venus Verticordia! But after all,

as La Fontaine would ſay, what uſeleſs anxiety about a trifle! for, according to the poet,

'Tis but a trifle when we know it;
Nothing when we don't.

It is probable, however, that the men of Palermo would not eaſily be brought into this way of thinking.

I have lately ſeen the public library at the *Academia Reale*, a name given here to the univerſity. The hall is very ſpacious, and the ſuperb ruins of Agrigentum, Segeſte, and Syracuſe, are to be ſeen there in freſco. This library contains, among others, a great number of Engliſh authors. Here are all the works of Swift, Bolingbroke, Hume, Addiſon, Cheſterfield, Pope, &c.

In general the inhabitants of Palermo are poſſeſſed of talents: to the ſtudy of the dead languages they unite that of French and Engliſh, which many ſpeak, eſpecially among the nobility, who have the rage of doing every thing à l'Angloiſe. They make private literary parties, principally for the ſtudy of poetry; for all are poets here by nature.

Italy, as you well know, being indebted to Sicily for its firſt poetical eſſays, there are now among them writers not unworthy of Theocritus and Moſchus. The Sicilians are fond of writing in their own language, which is the ancient Sicilian idiom corrupted and ſpoiled by a mixture of Greek, Latin, Norman, Arabic, Italian, and French, and which I think very ſoft and expreſſive, eſpecially in the mouth of a

pretty

pretty woman. The poetical productions of the Archbiſhop *Rau* are chefs d'œuvres. Anacreon and Sappho have been lately revived in the verſes of *Signor Miele:* he is even ſometimes more delicate than the former. I am ſorry you do not underſtand this language; for I would have ſent you his Idyls and Seaſons, which, I am perſuaded, would have afforded you pleaſure.

The ſtudy of antiquity is much cultivated here, and ſome individuals are in poſſeſſion of choice collections; the country, and even the capital itſelf, ſupplies them with materials. In fact, I underſtand that the lances, ſhields, helmets, creſts, as well as the chalk pots, and all the trinkets in gold, ſilver, and omichite marble, which are to be ſeen in the Muſeum, have been found (and are ſo daily) in the Phœnician and Carthaginian monuments without the Porte Neuve.

LETTER III.

Palermo, May 1788.

As the people of Palermo are very fond of foreigners, they have ſhewn me every thing, explained every thing, and indeed loaded me with civilities. They are however reproached with indifference, and even ſometimes hatred, towards their own countrymen; but this is not an accuſation merely of the preſent day, for the ancient Genius of Palermo, kept in the ſenatorial palace, is repreſented under the form of an old man, who has a ſerpent on his breaſt, with this device: *Alienos nutrit, ſe ipſum devorat.*

The Palermians are an acute and penetrating people. They are eloquent; but their eloquence is of that ſort which manifeſts itſelf leſs by words than geſtures: when they become in the leaſt heated, their paſſions are inſtantly pourtrayed on their countenances, and they geſticulate in a more than ordinary degree. In common too with the reſt of the Sicilians, they expreſs themſelves by motions of their hands, feet, head, ſhoulders, and eyes. The invention of this latter language is attributed to deſpotiſm and tyranny, and its origin is dated from the days of the tyrant Gelon. Since women, however,

excel in it, why not rather aſſign the credit of its diſcovery to ſo able and ſo indefatigable a tutor as Love? Has he not, in ſome parts of Barbary, invented a language of flowers?

To finiſh this ſketch of the Palermian character, which in general is that of the Sicilians at large, they are brave, and have fencing-ſchools without number. They are paſſionately fond of public entertainments, and, during their continuance, abandon themſelves to ſuch tranſports of joy, that one would think they were afraid pleaſure was about to ceaſe for ever, or that they ſhould not live to partake of it again. Love makes them jealous; and revenge blinds them to ſuch a degree, as ſometimes to make them guilty of murder. They are incapable of diſſimulation, haſty, ſuſpicious, and paſſionate, on which account they always ſucceed badly at court; and ſuch is the litigious character of this people, that they prefer going to law, to ſettling their differences amicably. Great ſkill is neceſſary to govern them, for they are extremely tenacious in this point. About ten years ago, the viceroy Fogliami gave them ſuch cauſe for diſſatisfaction by his conduct, that they had determined to maſſacre him; and this they would have effected, had he not ſaved himſelf in a coal-barge at Meſſina. The prince Caraminica, who governs them at preſent, has but one inconvenience to fear, which is, that of being compelled to remain for ever amongſt them.

The ancient Sicilians erected temples to Greedineſs and Gluttony: the moderns ought to pay divine honours to Daintineſs; for in no nation upon earth are made ſuch quantities

of

of ſweet-meats, liqueurs, ices, confectionary, *bon bons*, in ſhort, of every thing ſweet and luſcious. Their *caſſata*, however, muſt be acknowledged excellent; it is a ſort of tart, the ingredients of which are cream, chocolate, piſtachios, Savoy biſcuits, and preſerved citron.

I muſt not forget to mention the ordinary dreſs of the women here. Over a black ſilk petticoat they throw a cloak of the ſame ſtuff and colour, a part of which they tie round the body: the remaining part they raiſe above the head, and cover the face with it, ſo that the eyes and noſe only are viſible. Ladies of the firſt quality have not failed to adopt this dreſs, which is ſo well calculated to favour private intrigues; beſides, it is at the ſame time convenient and economical, eſpecially in the ſummer ſeaſon, when, as I am told, the women wear no other.

LETTER IV.

Agrigentum, May 1788.

I QUITTED Palermo with regret; having begun to feel an attachment to a place, where ſuperſtition, knowledge, and pleaſure are ſo happily blended together.

Amidſt the pictureſque views which préſent themſelves on all ſides in coaſting round this iſland, the ruins of Agrigentum claim particular regard. Viewing them through our teleſcopes, and afterwards with the naked eye, they excited in us an emotion which, as we approached them nearer, imagination raiſed to enthuſiaſm. At length we landed, and paſſing over ſome delightful valleys in which the charms of nature are heightened by the ſurrounding monuments of antiquity, at the diſtance of about four miles, we trod under feet the ruins of Agrigentum. Almoſt in a direct line, and in the midſt of gardens, of which the almond tree conſtitutes the principal beauty, are four temples, and the ruins of ſeveral others. They are ſituated on a hill which is two miles from Girgenti. The temple of Venus is not entire; but that of Concord, which has probably ſerved as a model for it, has ſuſtained no injury from the ravages of time. It is of the Doric

Doric order of architecture, compoſed of thirteen variegated columns in each wing, and ſix in the front. The baſes, chapters, and architraves are entire, and the architecture of the whole is ſimple and pleaſing. Nothing remains of the temples of Jupiter Olympus and of Hercules, but ruins. Some mutilated columns which have belonged to the latter, are ſeven feet in diameter. It contained the famous ſtatue of Hercules which Verres wiſhed to ſeize, as likewiſe the celebrated picture of that god, painted by Zeuxis, which he gave to the Agrigentines, becauſe, as he ſaid, they could never pay for it. Oppoſite to the temple is a tomb, ſuppoſed to be that of Theron, the firſt tyrant of Agrigentum, to whom Pindar dedicated ſome of his Olympics about three thouſand years ago. This lapſe of thirty ages, the idea of Pindar, Zeuxis, and the tyranny of Verres, againſt whom the Roman orator was obliged to employ the full force of his eloquence, made ſuch an impreſſion on us in contemplating theſe ruins, that we did nothing but gaze on, meaſure, and rapturouſly admire the ſcene before us. There are ſome other ruins in the neighbourhood; and what ſeems remarkable is, that all the ſtone of theſe edifices is a kind of concretion formed of oyſter and other ſhells, and procured from the mountains on which they are ſituated. While we were loſt in reflection upon theſe wonders, one of our company, who was the moſt affected at them, cried out in his enthuſiaſm, that Pomponace perhaps was not to blame in ſaying, that *Se il mondo non e eterno, per Dio Santo e molto vecchio.*

LETTER V.

Malta, May 1788.

WE did not loſe ſight of Ætna till we entered this port; for Malta, which is to the ſouth of Sicily, is ſeparated from it only by a channel of twenty-ſix leagues. Nature, in forming this port out of the rock, has been ſo ſportive in the operation, that ſhe has made ſeveral, the entrance to which is as much defended by its ſmallneſs, as by two very ſtrong caſtles which command it. It is ſurrounded by ſeveral well fortified towns, which are quite white; for the villages of La Valette, ſuch as Villena and Burmula (which next to La Valette is the moſt populous, and the inhabitants of which are much attached to commerce), the iſland St. Michael (whoſe caſtle St. Elme is one of the two which defend the entrance of the port), and the fortreſs La Cottonera, may likewiſe be called little towns all lying round La Valette, as a capital. The free-ſtone of the country, which is extremely white, is uſed here to build with; and as the ſtreets are paved with the ſame materials, it produces a very painful effect on the eyes, eſpecially in ſummer. The houſes are only two ſtories high, and the roofs reſemble platforms.

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The balconies are almoſt always incloſed, either on account of the heat, or from a motive of jealouſy. I ſhould be the more diſpoſed to attribute this to the latter cauſe, as the women look always through gratings or windows, and never ſhew themſelves in public. The grand maſter's hotel and St. John's church may be reckoned among the fineſt buildings of the place. The roof of the latter is of painted ſtone, and the pavement of marble tombs, whoſe inſcriptions are not always very edifying. In the chapel of the ſaint are two luſtres of maſſy gold; and behind the great altar is a beautiful croſs with a St. Sacrament of the ſame metal, of moſt exquiſite workmanſhip, by artiſts of the country. The hoſpital and the ſurgery merit attention. The religious library, which is open every day, and to which every one may have acceſs, contains a number of books, a little ſtatue of Hercules in marble, lately diſcovered in the country, and a collection of medals and natural productions which have been very lately formed.

The inhabitants are of a deep brown, which demonſtrates this to be the beginning of the climate of Africa. They are very induſtrious, and ſpeak Arabic, or rather a jargon in which are many words of that language. The women are, for the moſt part, ſupported by the humanity of the old commanders, towards whom, however, their gratitude is not always rigidly confined; and as the order enjoins celibacy, pretty girls are to be found all over the country whoſe virtue is not impregnable; ſo that, it is probable, the credit of fathering the greateſt

greateſt part of the children born here, may be due to St. John, or his knights. The dreſs of the women is ſingular: they wear a ſhort ſilk petticoat, which diſplays a fine leg and foot, and a neat ſhoe and ſtocking, an article of attire in which they are exceedingly nice and curious. Over a white veil that covers their head they throw a ſort of black cloak, ſomewhat leſs than that of the Palermians, which, deſcending on the ſhoulders, inclines a little to the right, and hides the front and one half of the figure, ſo that they ſee with one eye only.

There are neither thieves nor vagabonds in this town, and ſo little noiſe, that one imagines oneſelf in a convent. Its commerce conſiſts in oranges, of which the Malteſe are ſo extraordinarily careful, that, in order to improve their growth, they import mould from Sicily: they likewiſe trade in oats, cumin, aniſe, and cotton; the laſt of which they manufacture ſo well, that their ſtockings and bed-covers, on account of their excellence, are in great requeſt all over Europe. They export alſo the ſtone of the country in large quantities to Sicily, Naples, Barbary, and the Levant. Their little dogs, ſo much valued by the ancients, continue to be in great eſtimation. Theophraſtus, in his chapter on Silly Vanity, ſays, That if a vain man loſt a favourite puppy, he buried him, with an epitaph ſignifying that *he was of the Malteſe breed.* This iſland is ſixty miles in circumference, and contains 100,000 inhabitants; for, beſides La Valette, and the ancient town Notable, which are two leagues apart, there

are

are fifty towns and villages. The inhabitants believe, that ſince St. Paul was in the iſland the ſerpents are not poiſonous; that the viper will not generate in it; and that when brought here, it cannot even live. They ſhew you the tongues of ſerpents petrified by St. Paul, who, as ſome learned men affirm, was never in the place. Theſe pretended tongues, however, are nothing but foſſil fiſh-bones and gloſſopetræ.

The principal iſlands near Malta, which are likewiſe under the juriſdiction of the grand maſter, are Gozo and Comino, in which are ſeveral well fortified little towns. The iſland of Gozo is thirty miles in circumference; it contains above 10,000 inhabitants, and is in a reſpectable ſtate of defence. Gloſſopetræ and alabaſter are found here in abundance.

The emperor Charles V. in the year 1530, gave this territory, with the iſlands annexed to it, in perpetuity to the religious order of St. John, together with its dependant rights and juriſdiction; exacting only, as an acknowledgment of faith and homage to the crown of Sicily, an annual tribute to him and his ſucceſſors of a ſparrow hawk and falcon, to be delivered to the viceroy; which cuſtom ſtill exiſts.

LETTER VI.

Malta, May 1788.

THIS order conſiſts of knights, almoners, and ſoldiers, of whom the two firſt only wear the croſs of the order, that of the others having only three points. The number of knights amounts to upwards of three thouſand. Previous to their admiſſion, they are obliged to exhibit proofs of their noble deſcent, which differ according to the different languages. They make a vow of chaſtity, of obedience, and voluntary poverty. If the frailty of human nature prevents them from a rigid obſervance of the firſt of theſe vows, in return they voluntarily ſubſcribe to the ſecond, and neceſſity often compels them to keep the laſt. By another ſtatute of their order, they are bound to perſecute heathens, infidels, and Mahometans, after the example of the Maccabees, who gave no quarter to the enemies of the people of God; an idea not very reconcileable, perhaps, to the mild ſpirit of the goſpel. The knights of juſtice are alone eligible to the poſts of bailiffs, grand priors, and grand maſters: the knights of grace are competent to all excepting theſe. The military brothers are of two ſorts. Some of them perform the ſame functions in

in war, and in the duties of the hoſpital, as the knights. Others are deſtined to the ſervice of religion; and their employment is to ſing the praiſes of God in the conventual church, and to ſerve by turns as chaplains on board the ſhips and galleys of the order. The brothers of obedience, that is to ſay, the prieſts, without being obliged to go to Malta like the reſt, make the ſame vows, and devote themſelves to the ſervice of ſome one church of the order, under the authority of a grand prior, or commander, to whom they become ſubject, and then they enjoy ſome privilege. There are alſo ſome demi-croſſes, who, by expreſs permiſſion, are authoriſed to wear the golden croſs with three points.

As by one of the ſtatutes the grand maſter is inveſted with the power of puniſhing the priors, and other brothers of the order, who have been guilty of diſobedience or neglect, the latter are continually making their court to him in order to gain his favour, the form of government being rather monarchical than ariſtocratic; for though in matters of importance the grand maſter can do nothing without his council, yet having two votes in himſelf, the balance on this account, as well as from the influence he poſſeſſes, always inclines in his favour. He has beſides the right to coin money, to pardon criminals, and to appoint to the grand priories, and to the offices of bailiffs and commanders: the knights, whatever authority they poſſeſs, are ſubordinate to him in every thing not contrary to the ſtatutes of the order. He has ſixteen pages; and

when he paſſes along the ſtreets, it is the duty of the knights inſtantly to ſtop, and ſalute him with profound reſpect.

The different nations of which the order is compoſed, are called languages. There are eight of them: Provence, Auvergne, France, Italy, Arragon, Germany, Caſtille, and England. They have each of them chiefs, who are here called piliers, or conventual bailiffs. The principal of thoſe of Provence has the charge of grand commander; for Raimond du Puy, who about the beginning of the twelfth century formed the rules of the order, was a Provençal. The pilier of Auvergne is grand marſhal; that of France is grand hoſpitaller; that of Italy, grand admiral; and that of Arragon, protector, who was formerly ſtyled Drapier. The pilier of Germany is grand chancellor; and that of England, turcopolier, or general of infantry. The palace of each nation is called an inn, becauſe the knights belonging to it dine and uſually meet in it. Among the regulations relative to diet, the knights are forbidden to bring dogs to the inn, under the penalty of incurring the *ſeptaine;* which conſiſts in faſting ſeven days ſucceſſively, and on the fourth and ſixth Feriæ * to have bread and water only for their ſupport; and to be ſubjected to the diſcipline, that is, to receive ſtripes with a ſwitch from a prieſt of the order, during the performance of the pſalm *Deus miſereatur noſtri.* The beſt of the matter is, that they are ſubject to the ſame puniſhment

* The Feria is a day of the week between Sunday and Saturday.

if,

if, on the days when they dine at the inn, they carry away bread, wine, or any thing elſe: a regulation which impreſſes us with no very exalted idea either of the delicacy of their ſtomachs, or their meals. It may be conceived too, that they are not often convicted of ſuch high miſdemeanours; for the puniſhment annexed to them would be too humiliating to perſons who have proved I know not how many deſcents.

I need not inform you, that the Turks have made ſeveral attempts to get poſſeſſion of this iſland. Gozo firſt felt the effects of their fury; for, not daring to attack Malta, they burned that town, and carried away the inhabitants priſoners, whom they ſent to the galleys. About the middle of the ſixteenth century, Soliman diſpatched a ſquadron of fifty ſail, ſmall veſſels not included, with 30,000 men, under the command of a pacha. Muſtapha, nephew to the grand ſignor, though at the advanced age of ſeventy years, on account of his valour and experience embarked on board it, as commander of the land forces. This fleet was ſo conſiderably reinforced on the paſſage, that, before it arrived at Malta, it conſiſted of near one hundred and ninety ſail. The Turks diſembarked their troops at the port of Marſa Sirocco, and opened their batteries againſt the caſtle of St. Elme, which they carried in the fourth aſſault, and took twelve hundred priſoners, among whom were a hundred and twelve knights. They loſt, however, above four thouſand men on the ſpot, and among others, Dragut, king and bacha of Tripoli. They then attacked the fortreſs St. Michael; but finding they could not

not eaſily make themſelves maſters of the place, they endeavoured to attack it at the ſame time by ſea as well as land. A Greek renegado was appointed admiral for the execution of this deſign. The attack was ſuſtained with ſuch vigour, that the Turks, after loſing five ſtandards, were obliged to retreat. They, notwithſtanding, hazarded a new aſſault on the town of St. Michael and the citadel; which occaſioned much bloodſhed to both parties, and would have finiſhed favourably to the Turks, if the brave grand maſter, La Valette, old as he was, had not rallied the knights, who, piqued with honour, attacked the enemy with ſuch intrepidity, that they drove them from the very rampart on which they had placed their ſtandard. Under theſe circumſtances it was that the king of Spain's fleet landed a body of troops, to ſuccour the town on that part of the coaſt which is called Meleca. The Turks raiſed the ſiege on receiving intelligence of this aid, and Muſtapha, at the head of 16,000 men, marched to engage the Chriſtians in the plain of Talmaldil; where he was ſo roughly handled, that, after having loſt three thouſand men in this battle alone, he precipitately embarked his troops and fled. The ſiege was very bloody, and nine thouſand perſons, knights and ſoldiers, loſt their lives in it. For the better defence of the iſland and town, the grand maſter laid the foundations of a new city on mount Sciberras, which after him was called La Valette. Towards the concluſion of the ſixteenth century, the grand ſignor equipped a fleet of ninety ſail, and ſent it ſecretly againſt Malta, where the troops

troops were diſembarked in the night near Marſa Sirocco. The knights were not to be diſmayed by danger or ſurpriſe, and behaved ſo gallantly, that, after ſome ſkirmiſhes, the Turks were routed, and compelled to reimbark in haſte, and retire to Tripoli. Since that time they have not appeared before Malta; ſo that the knights, having no materials for their courage, have ſunk into a kind of apathy, out of which they are rouſed only by occaſional diſputes on national or individual pre-eminence. The antipathy that ſubſiſts between the French and Italian knights is, in particular, a ſource of perpetual animoſity, which, in defiance of the puniſhments denounced by the order againſt the aggreſſor, often terminates in duels. They have further ſubſtituted the amuſements of gaming to the fatigues of war; and the greater part of them are ſo violently addicted to this vice, that they often ruin themſelves, if it happens that they have wherewithal to be ruined.

In all probability this order, which vanity, ſuperſtition, and poverty, have hitherto contributed to ſupport, will not be of long duration, and the iſland perhaps will again become ſubject to the king of Naples. As the Engliſh faction compelled the order to make very great retrenchments in their expences, the revolutions in manners and politics which are likely to take place, by making new ones continually neceſſary, will reduce it into ſo poor a ſtate, that, being no longer able to ſupport itſelf, it muſt neceſſarily expire. This, indeed, is not clear to demonſtration; but I am

nevertheleſs

nevertheleſs ſtrongly inclined to ſuch an opinion. It appears to me, that there is but one mean by which it can eſcape this threatened diſſolution; which would be, for the knights to renew the offer lately made by them to the Chriſtian powers, of clearing the ſeas, for a moderate ſubſidy, of the pirates of Tripoli, Tunis, Algiers, and Morocco. This corps might then be conſidered as of real utility; for at preſent, with its two frigates and galleys, it does but linger out an exiſtence; nor would the ſailing of its fleet be any longer, as it is now, a ſubject for ridicule. Such a plan would be of the more real utility, ſince the barbarians, notwithſtanding our conſuls, our preſents, and that baſe ſubmiſſion we pay them, always conclude by taking our ſhips from us;—from us, who ſupply them with arms, whoſe wealth and whoſe women are their prey, and who, beſides ſuffering their depredations, encourage a ſpirit of apoſtacy and villany in our own countrymen, in affording them an opportunity, by abjuring their religion, of plundering their fellow-ſubjects.

I hope this digreſſion has not been tedious; for though there is little intereſting about a bailiff or a grand prior, it is pleaſing to take a view of this ſociety of religious warriors, whoſe arms have been ſo formidable to the Turks when in the ſplendour of their power, and whoſe efforts inſpired them with more terror than thoſe of all the Chriſtian world beſide. We ſee, too, in the grand maſter, a monarch at the head of 100,000 ſubjects, all ſatisfied under his government.

LET-

LETTER VII.

Argentiere, May 28, 1788.

MALTA begins to recede from our view: ſcarcely is it now viſible above the waves—they overwhelm it—it is no more.

The weather is beautiful; a ſoft breeze gently preſſes our canvaſs; the horizon is bounded by clouds only, through which we ſeek to paſs.

What ſervices did not he render to his fellow-creatures, whoſe bold and daring ſpirit firſt ventured on the liquid plain! Doubtleſs *illi robur & æs triplex circa pectus erat!* But a few days, and we are in the Egean ſea. I am called to ſee Cythera, that iſland which gave birth to the queen of ſmiles. O Venus, ſince modeſty is at thy ſide, we tender thee our vows! Accept the homage—our offerings are too pure to hurt thy baſhfulneſs. Crete and Ida now appear, and give riſe to new emotions, which augment in proportion as the imagination warms.

We are now near the two Sporades, Melos and Antimelos; we paſs them—and anchor at *Cimoli*, called by the Greeks *Kimoli*, and by the Franks Argentiera, on account of the gold and ſilver mines which have been diſcovered there,

but of which the Greeks are ſilent, leſt they ſhould be obliged by their maſters to work them.

This iſland is not far diſtant from Milo, and is only eight miles in circumference. The port, which is ſmall, is not deep enough to admit ſhips of burden. The country is mountainous, ſtony, and almoſt barren. Here is none but ciſtern water, and very little of that. The ſmall portion of land laid out in agriculture or vineyards, produces ſcarcely ſufficient for the ſupport of the inhabitants; ſo that they eat the grapes, and are obliged to get wine from Milo. The iſland grows likewiſe a little barley and cotton; but nature, which never beſtows every thing, has denied it in trees what it has given it in ſilver. There is a great deal of that *terra cimolia* to which the ancients, among other properties, attributed that of curing the rheum. It is a ſort of white chalk, fat and ſoapy, heavy, taſteleſs, and friable, uſed at preſent, as it was in the days of Pliny, to whiten linen. I am told, that in the baths at Smyrna they rub the ſkin with it. Game, on account of the multitude of ſportſmen, is not plentiful. We have met with ſome partridges and hares, however; I ſhot at them with my uſual ſkill, and you may gueſs that I miſſed them. The village contains at moſt three hundred ſouls. The houſes are ſmall and wretched, reſembling rather cottages. The churches and chapels, which are very numerous, are better built. There is not a ſingle Turk here; but there is a French conſul, who does not omit every morning to diſplay his flag.

We

We were at the houſe of the chief man of the village, whither the people of the country reſorted to us in numbers, as they were very deſirous of ſeeing us, and of hearing news. Their curioſity, their dreſs, hoſpitality, language, and figure, brought to our minds the pleaſing recollection of thoſe days in Greece, when a benevolent and generous people ran in crowds to the firſt ſtranger they met. This chief gave us ſome milk, which is all the country produces, and would accept of nothing in return. The ornaments of his houſe, agreeably to the mode and taſte of the country, conſiſted in little gilt chalk pots, and pictures of ſaints drawn with flat faces. His white beard, his grave and majeſtic air, and, more than all, his great age and exemplary virtue, have gained him the confidence and love of his countrymen. They liſtened to him with great attention, and ſhewed the greateſt deference to whatever he ſaid. I am aſſured that, throughout Greece, the rigours of age are greatly ſoftened by the complaiſance, ſubmiſſion, and reſpect it univerſally meets with from youth; from which it would ſeem, that the repreſentations of the ancients, in this reſpect, are leſs the productions of imagination, than faithful copies of nature.

Theſe people are all ſailors, and the greater part excellent pilots. Beſides their own language, they ſpeak Italian, French, and even Engliſh. The women knit cotton ſtockings, with which they ſupply the neighbouring iſlands. Their natural ſprightlineſs, added to a deſire of diſpoſing of their

commodities, made them ſo familiar, that ſeveral of them took us by the arm, and preſſed us to go home with them. This behaviour has given riſe to a report, that their virtue is not proof againſt ſeduction, which indeed I underſtand to be ſo far true, when they are enabled by the ſale of it to procure the price of an abſolution, the refuſal of which they conſider as a great calamity. In general they are neither handſome nor ugly; they have a great deal of *embonpoint*, and very thick legs, which they eſteem a beauty, and, to increaſe their natural ſize, they wear ſeveral pairs of ſtockings. Their dreſs is curious and neat: over a ſhirt, which buttons down the breaſt, and deſcends to the middle of the leg, they put a gilt waiſtcoat with a red border, which, while it confines the breaſt, does not hinder it from riſing; to this they add a ſort of handkerchief which floats behind; they wear white ſtockings, and little boots, with yellow Morocco ſlippers, and turbans of various ſorts.

All the children of the village aſked us for *paras*, a Turkiſh coin worth about three farthings. The country is truly wretched: nevertheleſs great crimes are rare in it.

The inhabitants pay an annual tribute to the grand ſignior of five piaſtres per head, which amounts nearly to a crown. The women and prieſts, it ſeems, are not computed in this capitation.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

Salonica, June 3, 1788.

SURROUNDED by the enchantments of fable, we traverſed the Egean ſea, with varied emotions of pleaſure, rapture, and aſtoniſhment at every object we beheld. Every iſland and rock, even the ſky, and the ſea itſelf, are intereſting to the claſſical obſerver. Hence the world has been peopled with gods, heroes, legiſlators, poets, orators, philoſophers, and artiſts; and with women too, whoſe beauty gave animation to the marble under the hands of Phidias and Praxiteles: and when we reflect that nothing more remains of them but their aſhes, who can repreſs the heaving ſigh?

We are now coaſting along Ionia. The country of Homer preſents itſelf to view, and attracts our whole attention. On the ſhore are handſome buildings, and the flags of various nations are ſeen flying in the port. A foreſt of cypreſſes, which commands the town, gives a melancholy, yet majeſtic air to the whole country. Theſe houſes, which are of wood, recall to my recollection the capital of the kingdom

dom of Crœſus, which was built of reeds. The dread of the plague obliges us to leave this place: it now rages with great fury.

Calms, and the approach of night, obliged us to anchor at Leſbos in the harbour of Metelin, which ſtands on the ruins of the ancient Mitylene, the very port in which the Athenians triumphed over the Spartans. Cruel Sappho, unhappy Alceus was not unworthy of thy love! but Phaon's obduracy well revenged his wrongs. We hear a frightful howling—it proceeds from the terrified Turks; who, not knowing our veſſel, are making fires on the caſtle to give an alarm, which they further endeavour to ſpread by their cries.

The ſky is ſerene; and now that the greater part of mankind, forgetful of their cares, are wrapped in ſleep, theſe wretches are kept awake by their fears; while we remain upon deck, continuing our converſation on this iſland, which has ſtill charms for us. It was formerly renowned for its fertility, the beauty of its women, the excellence of its wines, eſpecially thoſe of Methymne, and the ſkill of its muſicians; the celebrated Arion being a native of this place, as well as Terpander, who put the ſeven firſt ſtrings to the lyre. The number of towns in this iſland was ſeven, Mitylene, Methymne, Troas, Antiſſa, Pyrra, Ariſba, and Ereſſos the birth-place of Theophraſtus, who made this memorable ſpeech to his diſciples, on his death-bed: "Life "is deluſive; it promiſes us great pleaſure in the poſſeſ-

"ſion

" ſion of glory; but ſcarcely have we begun to live, when " we are called to die. No paſſion is often more fruitleſs " than a love of fame. Nevertheleſs, my diſciples, be con- " tented: if you ſet little value on the eſteem of men, you " will ſave yourſelves much labour; if your courage does " not ſink under it, glory may happen to be your recom- " penſe. Remember only that there are many uſeleſs things " in life, and few which lead to a ſure end."

We dwelt too with pleaſure on the idea of being now in the port of a city formerly ſo remarkable for its magnificent buildings, and whoſe theatre furniſhed Pompey the Great with a model for the one he built at Rome, and which contained upwards of 40,000 perſons; where Epicurus and Ariſtotle taught for ſome time, and in which Marcellus paſſed his days in philoſophical retirement after the battle of Pharſalia. This town gave birth to Alceus, the tenth muſe, whoſe famous ode we have ſolemnly recited. The hiſtorian Hellanicus was born here; as was Pittacus, one of the ſeven ſages, who became the tyrant of his country in order to reſtore liberty to it.

The riſing ſun at length gratified our impatience to behold the iſland. It is pretty well cultivated, the ſoil and climate being very favourable to the production of wine, olives, corn, and figs. A near view of the moſques and houſes ſtrangely deranged our laſt night's illuſions. The Turks ſoon recovered from their terror; but we did not go on ſhore, on account of the plague, which drove us hence, as it did from Smyrna.

This

This iſland is to the eaſt of Aſia Minor, and is a hundred and fifty miles in circumference. Black marble was formerly procured from its quarries.

We caſt anchor at Tenedos, *ſtatio malè fida carinis*, oppoſite to the kingdom of Priam. In the numerous ſummits, the lofty pines, the water and the woods of mount Ida, we beheld the original of that picture which the immortal Homer drew three thouſand years ago. Troy is no more; but this famous city, with the fleet and army of confederated Greece, ſtill exiſt in the pages of Homer and Virgil. There are here ſome magnificent ruins in marble, which, as we were informed, are the wrecks of a gymnaſium of the ſecond Troy, one of the eighteen cities which bore the name of Alexander. Theſe ruins are the more venerable, by being emboſomed in conſecrated groves, and ſituated in the middle of a plain watered by the Simois, which is afterwards loſt under the ſummit of mount Ida. The like ſcourge which hindered us from landing at Smyrna and Leſbos, prevented us from going aſhore here. We wiſhed much to tread that earth which has been drenched with the blood of ſo many heroes; but we were obliged to have patience.

The iſland of Tenedos, rendered immortal by the retreat of the Grecian fleet, ſtill retains its former name, and continues to be inhabited by Greeks, who carefully cultivate its ſoil. The muſcadine grapes of this iſland are excellent, and much ſought after throughout the Levant. The village, as it appeared from our veſſel, is built on ancient ruins, and contains

nothing

nothing remarkable. It is one of the iſlands reduced by the Perſians in a very extraordinary manner, if we can credit Herodotus, the father of hiſtory, who tells us, that the inhabitants of Chio and Leſbos, two iſlands of conſiderable extent, together with thoſe of Tenedos, were caught by the barbarians in a ſort of net; for the latter, taking each other by the hand, and forming a line from north to ſouth, drove the people before them. What ſeems moſt curious is, that the above hiſtorian, after having ſpoken of the conqueſt of the Ionian towns on the continent by the ſame fleet, very ſeriouſly adds, that the Perſians did not attempt to take the inhabitants of theſe in like manner; for this, ſays he, would have been impoſſible. Admitting the truth of the former account, nothing ſeems to have been eaſier.

In reflecting on the antiquity of the plague in the eaſt, I cannot forget that which broke out at Troy during the ſiege. It firſt attacked the mules and dogs, and afterwards the ſoldiers. The poet aſcribes it to divine wrath, as the Jewiſh pſalmiſt does the plagues of Egypt, which produced the ſame effect. Some commentators affirm, that Providence has diſpoſed things in this manner, to give men time to ſee and to repent of their crimes. What a pity that thoſe gentlemen themſelves were not then living! the ſoldiers would have been warned to be on their guard, and the mules would have been ſpared.

We paid a viſit to the iſland of Lemnos, called by the Greeks *Stalimene*, after the name of its ancient capital. It forms a

ſquare of almoſt twenty-one miles, and produces vines, corn, &c. which are cultivated by the Greeks. The *Terra Lemnia*, of which the ancients have ſaid ſo much, is found here in great plenty. As it is ſo celebrated, I ſhall mention it alſo, in order to inform you that our pilot endeavoured to perſuade us that it is a remedy for all diſeaſes; whence I conclude, that it is good for nothing. Not having landed, however, we did not ſee it. Homer ſays, that wine was carried from this iſland to the ſiege of Troy; and I am not ſurpriſed that Juno ſent hither for the god of ſleep. Hither poor Vulcan was precipitated from heaven; but the explanation of this fable is, that there are here a number of ſubterraneous fires. Pliny mentions a famous labyrinth in this iſland, of which he had ſeen the ruins; whilſt that of Crete, ſays he, is no more. The hundred and fifty columns of the building, manufactured with a lapidary's wheel, were ſuſpended from a peculiar machine, and might be turned by a child. We ſtaid here an hour, and afterwards continued our journey.

We next beheld Strymon and Stagira. Happy country! thy Ariſtotle will enjoy a fame as laſting as that of his pupil Alexander!

Why does mount Athos hide his head in the clouds? I have diſcovered the reaſon: to conceal the bluſhes excited by ſurrounding ignorance and ſuperſtition, which ſeem to have taken up their reſidence in the fourſcore convents of the Caloyers. Theſe are monks (lazy drones) of the order of

St.

St. Baſil, who do very little honour to their founder. They amount to ſix hundred in number; and the convents have artillery to defend them againſt banditti. It is ſaid, that they are in poſſeſſion of ſome very ancient and rare manuſcripts; and that they do not read them, which I can eaſily credit. Herodotus tells us, that Xerxes pierced the iſthmus of this promontory.

We had now in view Olympus, which ſeparated Macedonia from Theſſaly, the valley of which, anciently called Tempe, ſtill retains the ſame name, and alſo Oſſa and Pelion. This view, like many others which have delighted us, would throw a poet into ecſtaſy; for we, who are not inſpired by the muſes, cannot refrain from admiration. Some of us are even become poets; and who that breathes this air, in which the muſes were nurſed, and which kindled the fire of the greateſt geniuſes of Greece, can help catching a portion of enthuſiaſtic ardour?

We paſſed from the gulf Syngiticus to that of Thermaicus, and anchored in the bay of Thermes, Theſſalonica or Salonica, in the country of the Myrmidons.

LETTER IX.

Salonica, June 15, 1788.

THANK God, the plague is not here!—The Turks being now in their holy month, the *Ramazan*, which is their Lent, the minarets of above forty moſques preſent magnificent illuminations every night. As Mahomet received the Koran from heaven in the moon *Ramazan*, he conſecrated it to faſting, from which it derives its name. This Lent is far more rigid than that of the Roman Catholics; the Turks not being allowed to eat any thing all the day, and ſtill leſs to drink, or to ſmoke. Thoſe therefore who have nothing to do, go to ſleep, to avoid languor; or gravely lounge on the ſopha of a ſhop, and kill time by continually turning the beads of a roſary, and looking at the paſſengers. Immediately after ſun-ſet, the *muezzins*, or criers of the moſques, give notice that it is time for Muſſulmen to dine; but their impatience generally anticipates this warning. They then ſet about their prayers and ablutions with all poſſible diſpatch, that they may the ſooner enjoy their pipe and their coffee.

I muſt not forget to tell you, that the *minarets* are towers built

built in the form of ſpires, gradually diminiſhing upwards, with a gallery at about one third of their height, and terminating in a point, over which is placed a golden croſs. The criers, entering this gallery through a door which opens eaſtwards towards Mecca, put their hands on their ears as if they were going to ſtop them, and, firſt turning round towards the four cardinal points, repeat theſe words in a tone as if they were chanting: "God is great—God is God—there "is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet. Come to "good works, haſten to prayers, &c." This notice they repeat five times a day. On theſe occaſions many repair to the moſques; but the greater number pray in their own houſes, or wherever they may then happen to be.

I dined to day with a Turk. The gates were ſhut a little before ſun-ſet; and I was waiting at the port for our boat to take me on board. The ſurgeon of the ſhip was with me; and as we knew not what to do with ourſelves, we went into a Turkiſh coffeehouſe on the beach, and were extremely happy to find nobody in it but the maſter. The *muezzins* having at this time begun to call the people to prayers, the coffeehouſe-keeper inſtantly betook himſelf to a neighbouring fountain, knelt down, raiſed his eyes towards heaven, then turned them downwards to the earth, which he appeared to kiſs; and began to waſh his hands, feet, arms, head, neck, ears, noſe and noſtrils with a ſurpriſing air of gravity and devotion. Having finiſhed his prayers and ablutions, he ſpread out a mat before the door of the coffeehouſe,

and

and placing upon it a large diſh of tinned copper, two feet in diameter, and containing five or ſix different ſorts of meat, he and his ſervant ſat down together croſs-legged to partake of a repaſt. As we looked at him from motives of curioſity, he thought the cravings of hunger were felt as ſtrongly at our ſtomachs as at his own, and invited us by ſigns to dinner with him, adding, in Italian, *Mangiare, mangiare.* This invitation, an act of hoſpitality in which the Turks are never deficient, we readily accepted. The diſhes conſiſted of mutton ſteaks, and forced-meat balls filled with ſpices, which the Turk ſeemed greatly to prize, for he obſerved to me that it was *bono:* there were likewiſe fiſh, and pilaw, which conſiſts of dry rice boiled with mutton fat. We ate with our fingers, for in general the Turks uſe neither forks nor ſpoons. With reſpect to the pilaw, we were obliged to give that up, not liking it ſo well, nor being able to manage it ſo dexterouſly as our companions, who ſwallowed it after having firſt made it into balls with their fingers. Their bread is a ſort of cake pretty well taſted: the Turks uſe no other, or at leaſt give the preference to this above every other kind. As it is not cuſtomary here to drink during meals, the two Muſſulmen got up to go to perform ablution, and to drink at the fountain; and we went on board our veſſel.

You know that idiots make their fortunes in Mahommedan countries, or at leaſt live very much at their eaſe, without being obliged to work for their bread. In one corner of the coffeehouſe was a negro woman ſitting upon a mat, naked,

or

or at leaſt nearly ſo; ſhe was very old, and frightfully ugly, but of this ſhe was not ſenſible: ſhe ſwallowed every thing offered to her, even tobacco, which ſhewed that ſhe had really loſt that reaſon which the gods, ſays an ancient, gave us in a fit of anger. She had no cares, however, and but few wants, which were even anticipated by the humanity of her protectors. She had been ſupported by the piety of true believers ever ſince ſhe was ten years of age. I ſaw likewiſe a madman amuſing himſelf with caning the Janiſſaries in the ſtreet. This reſpect of the Muſſulmen for maniacs often extends even to adoration. On this occaſion I ſhall relate to you a ſtory from the *Bibliotheque Orientale* of Herbelot.—A caliph of Bagdad, having heard that there was a madman who pretended to be the Deity, ordered him to be brought before him, to examine whether he was really inſane or an impoſtor. For this purpoſe he thus addreſſed him: A few days ago a man was brought before me, charged with counterfeiting inſanity, and wiſhing to paſs as an envoy from heaven: I committed him to priſon; and the conſequence was, that he was tried, and condemned to loſe his head. The fool immediately replied: You acted as one of my good and faithful ſervants: your conduct is to me highly agreeable; for I did not beſtow the gift of prophecy on that wretch, nor did he receive any miſſion from me. On hearing this, the caliph was almoſt ready to fall down on his knees and adore him, for the Turks believe that ſuch people are inſpired by the Spirit of God. This idea may lay claim

to

to the ſanction of antiquity, and is to be met with, at leaſt to a certain degree, even in poliſhed ſocieties, as well as among ſavage tribes. Does this ariſe from an idea that the loſs of reaſon is to be accounted a happineſs reſerved alone for the favourites of heaven? or do the Turks think that theſe people reſemble thoſe gods, who, according to the Pagan mythology, were not remarkable for their wiſdom?

LETTER X.

Salonica, June 1788.

THIS town is ſituated cloſe to the end of a gulf, and terminates on the declivity of a mountain: it is flanked by two old ruinous caſtles on the ſide next the ſea, and by two others towards the land. It is from five to ſix miles in circumference, and is ſurrounded by a pretty ſtrong wall. The houſes are of wood painted red, and edged towards the roof with black: on the corners of them there is frequently a verſe of the Koran, or ſome ſcrap of poetry written in gilt letters. They are decorated with terraſſes; and the courts are often ornamented with cypreſs-trees, which the Turks, who are of a melancholy turn, greatly delight in. The principal part of the ſtreets, on account of the heat of the ſun, are covered with wood, which does not tend to make them more wholeſome, as it prevents a proper circulation of air. Others ſwarm with ſparrows, doves, crows, ravens, and ſtorks, and alſo with dogs and cats. No one dare moleſt theſe animals; for the Turks, though they do not, like the Egyptians, exalt them into deities, would, like them, conſider the perſon who injures them as a murderer, and treat him accordingly.

ingly. The ſhops are faſtened with ſmall bolts; for, thanks to the influence of religion! there are here no thieves. The ſurrounding country is well cultivated, and abounds with partridges, hares, pheaſants, hedgehogs, and a great number of tortoiſes.

The inhabitants of this place are computed at 80,000: the Jews, who have ſeveral ſynagogues here, amount to 23,000; the Greeks and Francs to 20,000; and the remainder are Turks. The Greeks and Latins have their reſpective churches, in which they may pray as much as they pleaſe without fear of moleſtation. The ſtreets in which the Jews live, may be known by their ſtench. The Jeweſſes are in general dirty; ſome of them may be ſeen, eſpecially on Saturdays, who are handſome, clean, and well dreſſed. As we were going out of the Jewiſh quarter, the children came in crowds to aſk us for *paras*, to which they were encouraged by their mothers, with a view probably of inſpiring them with an early taſte for the property of others. The Jews however do not meet here with the beſt of treatment. If a Turk has occaſion for the ſervice of a Jew, he ſeldom fails to honour him with the epithet of pimp or cuckold, or with ſome other title equally reſpectable. The Jews, it is true, are not much affected by contempt, and even bad treatment, provided they are well paid. They are the principal venders of proviſions, and in this buſineſs acquit themſelves with much ability; they exerciſe the functions alſo of boatmen, porters, uſurers, brokers, &c.

The

The country is governed in regard to criminal matters by a *Mollah*, a name which denotes a *Cadi* or judge of ſuperior rank. The police is under the inſpection of a *Pacha*, a title given only to viziers and governors; and in his abſence it is directed by the *Mouſſelin*. Theſe offices are bought, or obtained by intereſt. The government, properly ſpeaking, is in the hands of the Janiſſaries, who act here like petty deſpots. Some of them, when in a ſtate of intoxication, have, merely to gratify their ſanguinary diſpoſition, or in order to try their powder, ſhot a Greek or a Jew. Others of them commit the like enormities through treachery, and in cold blood.

The principal articles of commerce here are cotton and wool, which, when manufactured into ſtuffs, are ſold by the Franks for three times the value of the raw materials: leather, carpets, and tobacco for ſmoking, which is uſed throughout all the Levant.

The burial-places are out of town, near the ſea-ſhore. At the end of each grave two large ſtones are fixed in the earth. Thoſe of people of diſtinction are of marble; and on one of them is cut out the turban peculiar to the rank of the deceaſed. Cloſe to the ſide of ſome of theſe ſtones young cypreſs-trees are planted. Near ſuch burial-places I ſaw fountains, where in a ſort of niche was depoſited a wooden cup for the convenience of perſons deſirous of quenching their thirſt.

In the upper part of the town, are the tombs of thoſe who

have fallen victims to the plague. Whilſt we were walking there, indulging in vain and melancholy reflections on the numberleſs calamities which afflict mankind, ſome Turkiſh children amuſed themſelves in throwing ſtones at us with a ſling, to which they added other compliments uſually beſtowed on the Franks, calling us *ghiaour*, that is to ſay, infidels. They would have continued this diverſion, which to us was not very agreeable, as we were deſcending into a valley where they would have never miſſed us, had not a venerable old man, who fortunately for us was *deſtined* to paſs that way, prevented them.

On our return to the town we met a pretty Turkiſh girl about fifteen or ſixteen years old. Her eyes, the only part of her which we could ſee, were the fineſt I ever beheld. When we approached cloſe to her, one of our company was ſo imprudent as to make ſigns to her, which is here the moſt effectual way to get aſſaſſinated. A boy who accompanied her, at this loſt all patience; looked at us fiercely, though it was with the fierceneſs of a child, and, laying his hand on his little dagger, ſaid ſomething to us in a menacing tone, which, as we were unacquainted with his language, we did not underſtand. As we were not deſirous that other Turks ſhould come up to explain it to us, we turned down another ſtreet.

While we were here a Frank killed a Turk, and took refuge on board our ſhip. Theſe two people, who were intimate

timate friends, had been dining together, notwithſtanding their difference of religion; and the Frank taking up the other's piſtol, it went off by accident, and diſpatched his unfortunate companion. The poor wretch was ſo affected at this misfortune, that he was immediately taken ill, and it is more than probable that it may occaſion his death.

LETTER XI.

Salonica, June 1788.

FOR ſome days after our arrival here the weather was extremely cold, but at preſent the heat is inſupportable. The putrid fever, which rages in the country at this time of the year, has already begun to make its appearance. Some of our ſailors have caught it, and this has determined us to depart hence immediately.

There are two Engliſh frigates now lying in the port, which gives ſome umbrage to the Turks, whom war and the rigours of faſting render ſuſpicious. They ſay it is a long time ſince any men of war were ſeen here. "Laſt month," ſay they, "we were viſited by two French ſhips, and "now two Engliſh ones have arrived. This, in time of war, "does not look well." Some of them in fact are ſo much diſſatisfied at this circumſtance, that I yeſterday obſerved a Turk flouriſh his ſabre in the air, on ſeeing two officers paſs his ſhop, as if he meant to have cut off the heads of theſe infidels. He did this, it is true, when he was pretty certain he could exhibit his bravado with impunity, that is to ſay, after the officers had gone by.

This

This town, to which Cicero was baniſhed at the inſtigation of the rapacious Verres, ſtill contains ſome remains of antiquity, both ſacred and profane. In the moſque of S. Sophia is to be ſeen an antique green pulpit, in which, according to tradition, St. Paul preached to the Theſſalonians. The Turks hold this relic, from which was inculcated a religion different from that of the true believers, in great veneration. This moſque was formerly a Greek church, and is pretty well built: but that of S. Dimitri is ſuperior in this reſpect, for it contains ſome beautiful columns of ancient red and green granite. At ſome little diſtance is an amphitheatre half buried in the earth, and ornamented with basreliefs. In another place is the portico of an ancient temple, the columns and figures of which are much mutilated: many of the latter poſſeſs conſiderable merit, particularly a Leda. In many ſtreets may be ſeen chapiters, columns, and ſtones of marble, with Greek inſcriptions, which the Turks have employed in the conſtruction and embelliſhment of their fountains.

I went to ſee the Caloyer monks, in order to learn if there are really any manuſcripts concerning mount Athos, and of what antiquity they are; but I found theſe poor wretches ſo ignorant that they ſcarcely underſtood the modern Greek, and ſo indigent that they were under the neceſſity of labouring to gain a ſubſiſtence. The derviſes or Turkiſh monks, who, to preſent the more ridiculous ſcene to a foreigner, are always

ways to be found in company with the Greek ones, are not ſo miſerable. I ſaw two of them walking together, who in their dreſs very much reſembled the *Cordeliers*. The elder wore a large cap; the younger had a ſmaller and ſhorter one; and as he diſcovered more folly than his companion, he was thought to be more divinely inſpired, and conſequently was more reſpected.

The Mahommedan Lent not laying any reſtraint upon the ſenſe of ſight, we were every day viſited by numbers of Turks who came to view our veſſel. They admired every thing they ſaw, and devoutly killed time by continually counting their roſaries: the beads of thoſe worn by the Turkiſh *petits-maîtres* are of tranſparent ſtones; and they are ſuſpended from the girdle by ſmall ſilver chains. They have gold watches, and the hilts and ſcabbards of their ſabres are covered with ſilver of curious workmanſhip. Some Greek country girls, very ſingularly dreſſed, came likewiſe to ſee us. Over a woollen robe with a white ground intermixed with ſeveral glaring colours, they wore a ſort of looſe gown without ſleeves, of the ſame ſtuff, which in part covered the boſom, the reſt of which was half concealed by a necklace of Turkiſh coins, intermixed with antique medals; their hair, interwoven with flowers, hung looſely over their ſhoulders. They formed a circular dance round a muſician, who, with his lute, modulated a tune ſuited to their ſteps, and ſung divers couplets, which they repeated after him.

Conſuls

Conſuls from France, England, Venice, Raguſa, and Naples reſide here. The Engliſh and French engroſs the chief trade. Naples ſends no ſhips to this port.

The amuſements of the Franks conſiſt in fiſhing, hunting, and billiards. In winter they have balls, eſpecially during the time of the Carnival; but always under that reſtraint which the ferocity of the Turks and the deſpotiſm of the Janiſſaries inſpire. The greater part of them therefore ſtay here only in the hope of being able to return to their own country with a ſufficient fortune to live at their eaſe.

I ſhall conclude by remarking, after Strabo, that the Theſſalians, who inhabited this country, were the firſt who made uſe of long robes to defend themſelves from the cold, in imitation of thoſe people ſituated to the north of Greece: this cuſtom afterwards became common throughout that country, and even among people who, living under a warm climate, ought rather to have worn as little dreſs as poſſible.

LETTER XII.

Sciato, June 23, 1788.

WE have juſt now come to anchor in a very fine port to the eaſt of this iſland. The village has been built only four years; it is therefore very ſmall, and contains no more than 200 inhabitants. The women, though certain of not incurring the fate of Helen, fled at our approach: I, however, ſaw ſome among them whoſe features were ſweet and regular; and whoſe looks were animated and intereſting. The people are very affable; they have only one church, one *papas* or prieſt, who now and then ſays maſs; and not a ſingle Turk is to be found among them. The *papas* can read fluently, which in this country paſſes for a ſign of great erudition; he confeſſes, communicates, and ſometimes excommunicates—but he never preaches: and in this he does right; for, being as little acquainted with that art as any of his brethren, he would only weary them to no purpoſe. Behind the ſanctuary of the church, is a pedeſtal with an ancient inſcription.

You will no doubt ſcarcely believe me when I aſſure you that the fine arts are cultivated in this place. There is a painter

painter here; but it is needleſs to add that he is not an Apelles. The principal neceſſaries of life, which are not very plentiful, are imported from Salonica and Smyrna: there is here however abundance of tobacco and brandy. Fruit-trees are rare; but the iſland produces corn and wine, which the inhabitants keep in caſks bedawbed with reſin, as do likewiſe thoſe of the neighbouring iſland of Scopelo, where it is in great plenty. It keeps well in this manner, but it contracts a moſt diſagreeable flavour. Honey is likewiſe procured here: it ſmells ſtrongly of thyme, and is very cheap. Game is ſcarce, conſiſting only of a few pigeons and partridges: we were not lucky enough to kill any; but we were in ſome meaſure indemnified for this loſs by the affability of a ſhepherd who made us a preſent of a pail of milk, for which he would not accept any thing. On our return from ſhooting, we went to reſt ourſelves at the tavern, where we dined on a large lamb roaſted on a wooden ſpit, which, like the heroes of Homer, we prepared ourſelves. Whilſt we were enjoying our repaſt, which was not the leſs delicious for its ſimplicity, the peaſants brought us ſome copper medals, for the moſt part collected from the neighbouring iſlands of Peparethos, Scopelo, &c. and ſome from Chalcis and Iſtria, ancient cities in Eubœa, &c. A perſon here is commiſſioned to buy all theſe medals, and to ſend them to the French conſul at Salonica, who has a fine collection.

A Greek, who called himſelf a phyſician, came on board of us yeſterday; he praiſed every thing, and flattered every

body. Speaking to his companion of me, he ſaid I was an angel, and this with a very ſerious air. The reaſon was, that he wanted a French book, having lately learned that language: though his flattery had completely diſguſted us, I gratified his wiſhes. On this occaſion Juvenal occurred to my mind; I thought of one of thoſe people whom he deſcribes when he ſays,

——Adulandi gens prudentiſſima, laudat
Sermonem indocti, faciem deformis amici.

The hills of this iſland are covered with holy thiſtle, centaury, thyme, ſage, and calamint, which at ſun-ſet perfume the air, and render the nights extremely delightful.

To-day the ſouth-eaſt wind was ſo hot, that we expected to have been ſtifled. We are told that this wind occaſions putrid fevers; and on that account our ſtay here will not be long.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

Zea, June 28, 1788.

THIS iſland, which is twenty miles in circumference, and has a fine port ſheltered on every ſide from the wind, was the country of Simonides, the philoſophical poet, of whom Pindar was the diſciple, and of the peripatetic philoſopher Ariſto. The village is ſituated on an eminence three miles from the ſea, and perhaps on the ſame ſpot where formerly ſtood Cartea, one of the two ancient towns of the iſland. The other, Coriſſia, was probably on the way to this village; and the brook that runs along the ſide of the road, was undoubtedly the Eliſſa, by which it was watered. Here Neſtor, on his return from the Trojan war, built the temple of Pallas Neduſia. Strabo, when relating this in his tenth book, makes mention likewiſe of a law of the iſland, by which it was enacted, that every perſon who exceeded the age of ſixty ſhould be poiſoned. On this occaſion, he quotes the words of Menander, whence it may be inferred that the above law met with his approbation. "What a wiſe law, O Phania, is "that of the Ceans! to take life from thoſe who are no "longer

"longer capable of enjoying it!" It is very probable that the magiſtrates of this iſland might have been affected with the *ſpleen*.

The inhabitants of this iſland, who are all Greeks, governed by their own magiſtrates, amount to about 5000. There are forty papas, and ſeven or eight convents of monks. Crimes are not frequent here, and ſeldom extend beyond petty larceny. The people manufacture wool, of which they make cloth ſufficient for their own uſe. The water of this village, which is conſidered as the beſt in the iſlands, is of a very diuretic quality. Plenty of red wine is to be met with here, and may be purchaſed on very reaſonable terms. Great part of it, both in colour and taſte, might paſs for Burgundy; and ſome merchants, it is ſaid, ſell it for ſuch at Conſtantinople. This wine is ſo delicate that it will not keep long; at the end of three months it is good for nothing. The grapes from which it is produced, are expoſed to the ſun for eight or ten days. Leſs pains are taken with the common wine, as the grapes intended for making it are dried only three or four days. Great quantities of barley, ſilk, gall-nuts, and wine, are exported from this iſland. Game is in great abundance; for, without the aſſiſtance of dogs, we killed an immenſe number of partridges.

There is an Engliſh vice-conſul in the village, who officiates in the ſame capacity to other nations. He came on board our veſſel, accompanied by his daughters, one of whom appeared to be a young lady of great talents; that is to ſay,

ſhe

ſhe talked a great deal more than her ſiſters, who paid much deference to her, becauſe ſhe had travelled. She boaſted ſo highly of this advantage, that it excited a curioſity in us to enquire where ſhe had been: but we could not help laughing when ſhe told us ſeriouſly that ſhe had been at Athens.

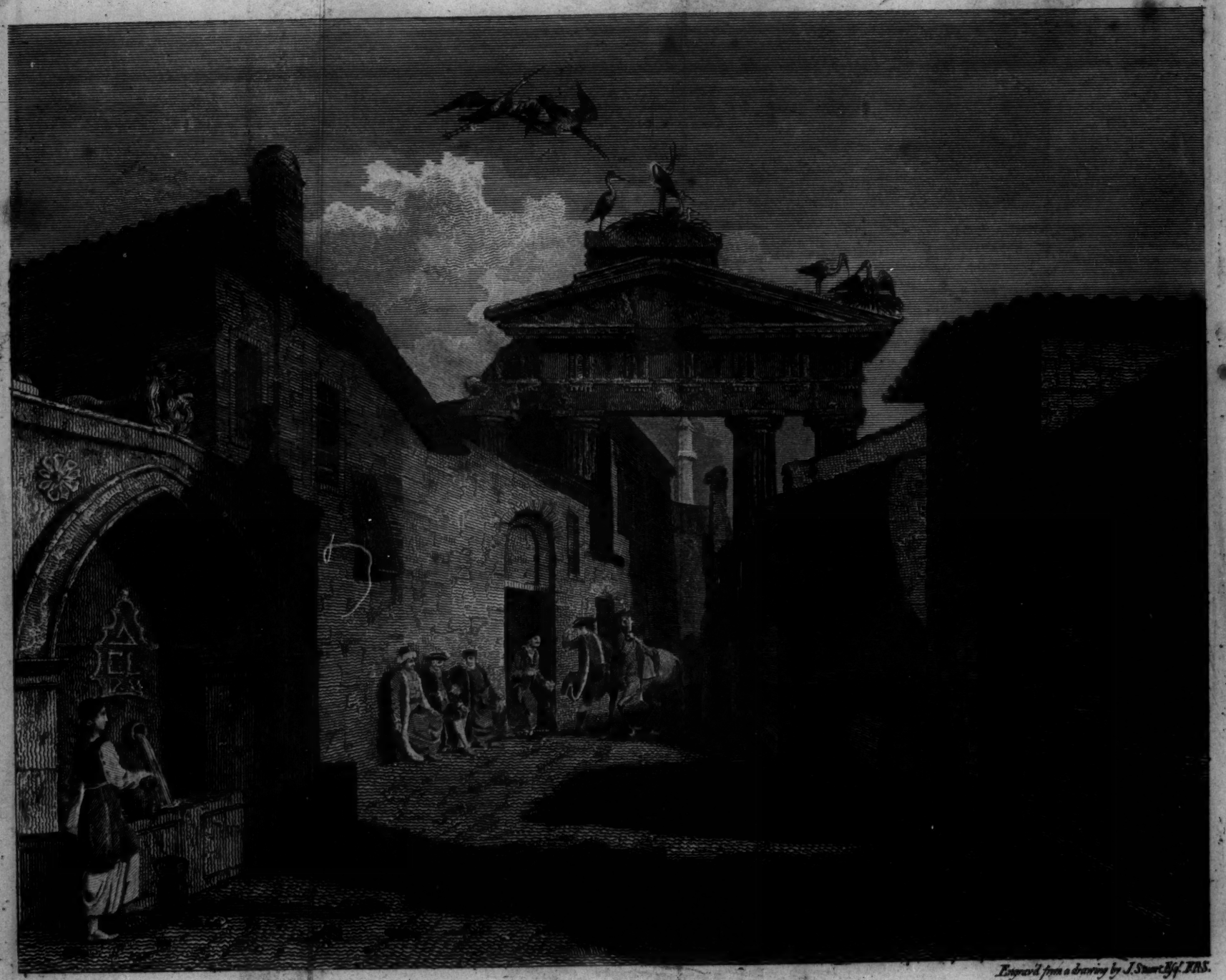
As to medals, none are found here but after heavy rains; and as theſe were all beſpoke for the Engliſh ambaſſador at Conſtantinople, we could not procure any of them.

On both ſides the valley, which leads to the village, there are gardens, which the Greeks cultivate as well as they can.

We entered one of them with our captain; and ſuch was its luxuriance, that we were obliged to be careful of our ſteps, for fear of treading under foot the productions with which the ground was covered, and to ſtoop continually to avoid doing injury to the fruits and bloſſoms above our heads. So great was the profuſion of apples, pears, plums, mulberries, apricots, and ripe lemons, which laſt diffuſed a delightful odour through the air, that they ſeemed all to grow upon the ſame tree. We taſted them all: and we found ſome black mulberries of a prodigious ſize, which were peculiarly excellent. The gardener, whoſe agreeable countenance increaſed the reſpectability of age, not ſatisfied with giving us the range of the garden, treated us with a baſket of the choiceſt fruits he could gather, and begged us to carry them on board with us; and it was with the utmoſt difficulty that we could prevail on him to accept a little money in return. He introduced us to his two daughters, whoſe only ornaments were innocence and beauty;

beauty; for the ſimple gowns they wore did not quite cover their boſoms, and expoſed their naked legs: a ſweet bluſh, which enhanced their beauty, overſpread their cheeks when they ſaw every eye fixed upon them. The father aſſured us, that, poor as he was, he valued theſe two treaſures beyond all the riches in the world: he thanked Heaven, he ſaid, for bleſſing him with them, while his only prayer was to breathe his laſt in their arms. This amiable family exhibited, in all its charms, the picture of a country life, which alone perhaps admits of thoſe pure joys to which ambition is a ſtranger. How ſweet in theſe moments was the recollection of the old man's diſcourſe to Erminia!

We are going to ſet ſail; for the diſadvantage of this port is, that a veſſel cannot get out of it with a north wind: on this account one was detained here laſt year two months.



Engravd from a drawing by J. Stuart Esq. FRS.

A View of the DORIC PORTICO *at* ATHENS, *in its present State.*

Publishd by R. Faulder New Bond Street July 1793

LETTER XIV.

Athens, July 14, 1788.

WE landed at *Porto Rafti*, the ancient *Panormum*, and came hither by land. In our voyage from Zea, we ſaw nothing remarkable, except Long Iſland, which is only a little way from it. This iſland, in which Paris taſted the firſt fruits of his conqueſt, is at preſent barren and deſolate. Near Porto Rafti is a ſmall village, the inhabitants of which are extremely poor. The papas even feel the effects of the general miſery, being obliged to labour for their living like the meaneſt of their flock: one of them, from whom we hired aſſes, followed us on foot from the harbour to the village. He wiſhed, as I imagine, by impoſing on us, to indemnify himſelf in ſome meaſure for the extortions of the Turks, as he demanded much more than his due for the hire of his animals. This induced the Engliſh conſul, reſident at Athens, who was with us, to aſk him if he was not aſhamed to make ſuch a charge, and to tell him that he wanted ſome Turks to deal with. This poor wretch, though a papas, received a month ago a hundred ſtrokes on the ſoles of his feet. He was ac-

cuſed by ſome of his countrymen with having ſupplied proviſions to a Ruſſian man of war, which appeared one evening for a few moments in the port. The fact is, that this veſſel was a French frigate; but, as he neither knew nor could prove that circumſtance, he was obliged to ſubmit to the puniſhment.

We met with nothing remarkable on the road, except a ſuperb lion couchant, in marble, which the aga beſtows on the public, but which ſome one leſs generous will probably one day convert into private property. The country is almoſt depopulated, and preſents to the view nothing but brambles and thorns. In all this ſpace there are but two or three ſmall villages. It is only in the environs of Athens that agriculture is again perceptible. Olives grow here as formerly, and have loſt nothing of their reputation. Thoſe called *colymbades*, which the ancients pickled, and uſed to create an appetite, have not changed their name among the modern Greeks. They are ſtill prepared in the ſame manner, and ſeem not to have loſt their former quality. Theſe olives are in great requeſt throughout all the Levant.

LETTER XV.

Athens, July 1788.

EVER ſince my arrival here, my thoughts have been in a continual ſtate of fluctuation, which may be better conceived than deſcribed. The reflection only of being in Athens excites ſo many intereſting ideas, that the exceſs of pleaſure I derive from them at certain intervals makes me think I am in a dream. What! do I now breathe the ſame air as Solon, Demoſthenes, Pericles, and Socrates? This thought gives me new life; and my imagination is elevated to ſuch a degree, that, ſoaring aloft, it ſpurns the boundaries of time, and carries me back to the age of theſe great men. I think I walk with them, and with the Athenian people, while every thing around me excites my aſtoniſhment. Sweet illuſion! why muſt I not enjoy thee longer? Alas! already art thou vaniſhed. Theſe ruins but too plainly indicate that Athens is no more. The illuſion ceaſes. I conſider for a moment, and ſtart back confounded at a chaſm of 3000 years. I tread then under foot the aſhes of ſo many illuſtrious Athenians! O heavens, why ſhould great men be doomed to pay the debt of

nature, in common with thoſe who are a burden to the earth? Here reaſon and voluptuouſneſs flowed from the mouth of the virtuous Epicurus! There the amiable Plato inculcated philoſophy and virtue! Cruel Sylla, to deprive poſterity of the ſacred groves of the Academy, in which Ariſtotle, as he ſtrayed, propounded the deepeſt queſtions of metaphyſics and morality! Yonder was the Areopagus—here ſtood the Odeum. This entire temple is that of Theſeus: it ſeems to have been built but yeſterday. Around are the ruins of that of Minerva, of the Acropolis, and the Pantheon.

This place is ſtill intereſting, independently of its ruins, when conſidered as the theatre in which the moſt illuſtrious nation of antiquity performed their exploits; whoſe genius enlightened that of Rome, and for ever retained its ſuperiority over her; and where heroiſm, the ſciences and the arts reached the higheſt degree of perfection to which the human mind is capable of attaining. Theſe ideas preſent to the imagination a ſucceſſion of ſcenes ever new and ever pleaſing: my heart is penetrated with them; it palpitates; a ſoft melancholy ſucceeds theſe ecſtaſies; I yield to the pleaſing illuſion, and indulge in my reveries till they at length vaniſh like "the baſeleſs fabric of viſion."

LET-

LETTER XVI.

Athens, July 1788.

I WRITE to you from the houſe of the Engliſh conſul, who is a Greek, and whoſe family are amiable. How much do we regret that we do not underſtand Greek! it is ſo painful to be incapable of replying to the numerous civilities with which his charming ſiſters load us. Theſe ladies make a point of anticipating our wiſhes themſelves, not admitting their ſervants to participate in this care. If they ſee us reſting on a ſopha, they carry their complaiſance ſo far, as to cool us, and drive away the flies with a large fan made of feathers; and this they do likewiſe when we are at dinner. The youngeſt particularly ſeems to make it her chief ſtudy to render our ſituation agreeable. She is the houſekeeper, and waits upon our ſervants even herſelf. Such amiable ſolicitude is no where to be met with, but in the poſterity of that people anciently ſo renowned for hoſpitality.

Among other things they give us ſour milk and curds, which when mixed with ſugar is very palatable. The Turks eat a great deal of this food, and call it *caimac*.

To-day

To-day is the Bayram, or Eaſter, of the Muſſulmen: it was announced early in the morning by the firing of cannon; and the Janiſſaries have ſtunned every body with their noiſy muſic. They came to the conſul's houſe to teſtify their joy, with a view of getting ſomething to increaſe it. I ſtill retain in my ears the ſound of their hoarſe timbals and ſhrill clarionets.

We have paid a viſit to the aga, or commander of the fortreſs. He was in his harem: he at leaſt ſent a meſſage to this purpoſe, in order that we might dance attendance for ſome time in what is called the antichamber: in about ten minutes he appeared: he is a handſome man, and, for a domeſtic, has a very genteel and noble air: he was in the ſervice of the captain pacha, the Turkiſh admiral. He received us very politely, preſenting us with coffee and ſweetmeats, which we all taſted out of the ſame ſpoon. Some Turkiſh lords, and a fool whom he keeps for his amuſement, were next ſerved. This cuſtom of keeping fools was formerly very much in vogue among the Europeans, and has been diſcontinued but very lately by our kings. This fool, who is very old and pale, like people of his character, was deſired to counterfeit a philoſopher: on which he trembled, became ſerious, then burſt into a fit of laughter, and made a thouſand contortions: the aga laughed, or rather ſmiled. We were then offered pipes, which we declined to accept. The aga, however, very ſeriouſly began ſmoking with a pipe of a very ſingular conſtruction, called a hookah, which is much uſed in the Levant.

This

This pipe, which is about five feet in length, is made of braſs wire, covered over with painted leather: it is terminated by a braſs machine with two tubes, one of which is bent, and joins to its extremity: the other is perpendicular, and filled with tobacco. Theſe two pipes afterwards unite in one; and being placed in a cryſtalline veſſel not quite filled with water, the ſmoke, as it paſſes through, occaſions the water to bubble, and, riſing afterwards in clouds, is very refreſhing: ſmoking in this manner is not only pleaſant, but even delightful, eſpecially when roſe water, which many employ, is uſed for that purpoſe. The aga for our amuſement entertained us with a concert, conſiſting of a cymbal, a flute, a mandora, and a paltry violin with three ſtrings, accompanied by a voice ſtill more diſagreeable than all theſe inſtruments put together. While the Turks were rapt in ecſtaſy, our patience was almoſt exhauſted; for even the pathetic appeared to us extremely monotonous and diſagreeable.

This, however, might probably ariſe from our not being ſenſible of the variations; and becauſe the muſic was in a ſtyle different from ours. A Frenchman, who is ſettled here, and who is very much attached to the Turkiſh cuſtoms, extols it to the ſkies. He ſays it is grave, noble, and majeſtic; that it is calculated to inſpire courage; in a word, that it is the oriental muſic, which I do not mean to deny. We aſked permiſſion of the aga to ſee the citadel, or rather the celebrated monuments it contains; but he begged us to wait till three days of the Bayram were over, leſt the Turks who go to walk there

there ſhould inſult us. This Bayram, indeed, has metamorphoſed them in ſuch a manner, that you would not know them again. They have thrown aſide their uſual gravity, and run about the ſtreets in promiſcuous crowds, without diſtinction of friend or foe, chatting, laughing, and amuſing themſelves.

Ever ſince our arrival, the conſul's father and mother have conſtantly dined with us; for the ſociety of ſtrangers is deemed a ſort of treat too valuable not to be made the moſt of. Our converſation is very agreeable; we talk, joke, and laugh at each other's jeſts, though they loſe their point by paſſing through the mouth of an interpreter. Theſe amiable people do not even quit us at night. Sophas, upon which beds are prepared, ſerve for the men: the women ſleep in the ſame manner in another chamber. Theſe ſophas, which are placed in an alcove, and generally occupy three-fourths of the room, are for the moſt part ſurrounded with rails: they are covered in ſummer with ſtriped cloth, imported from Ruſſia or other countries; and in winter with damaſk, or crimſon velvet, ornamented with gold fringe. They ſit upon them in the Turkiſh manner, firſt leaving their ſlippers below the eſtrade.

The conſul took me to ſee the *deſpot*, that is to ſay, the archbiſhop. We found him in diſhabille, enjoying the freſh air in a ſummer-houſe at the bottom of his garden: though a devotee, he received us very politely. Some deacons, who ſtood while every body elſe ſat down, on a ſignal from the deſpot, whoſe

whoſe domeſtics they are, ſerved us with ſweetmeats and coffee. My lord in the mean time occupied the firſt ſeat on the ſopha, ſo that we were all placed on his left.

The principal men among the Greeks are diſſatisfied with the cadi: there is a continual animoſity between them; and this may perhaps ariſe from the ancient ſpirit of liberty which ſtill flows in their veins. The cadi wiſhes to oppreſs them with impunity; and they on the other hand reſiſt him with all their might. Though they deteſt him, they however ſtill pay their court to him, and he in return hates them as heartily as they do him.

LETTER XVII.

Athens, July 1788.

WE have employed the whole of this day in viewing the ſuperb ruins of Athens. In the *Acropolis*, or citadel, we beheld with admiration the veſtibulum, which is magnificent. It was built by Pericles in the eighty-fifth Olympiad, to embelliſh the entrance into the citadel. It was completed in five years, at the expence of two thouſand and twelve talents. Pauſanias ſpeaks in raptures of the dazzling whiteneſs of the marble, and of the ſize of the ſtones, ſome of which are twenty-two feet in length. This veſtibulum is of the Doric order. It has five doors, which are twice as high as they are wide. The largeſt is twelve feet ſeven inches wide, the two next eight feet eight inches, and the two ſmalleſt are four feet four inches in width. After paſſing the veſtibulum, the *Parthenon*, or temple of the Virgin, principally attracts notice. It was built by thoſe celebrated artiſts, Callicrates and Ictines, by order of Pericles, who dedicated it to Minerva. The firſt view of it is highly ſtriking; for the beauty of the marble, and the majeſtic grandeur of the building, command the attention of the beholder.

I. Stuart, del.

View of the Temple of the Winds, with part of the Acropolis or fortress of Athens.

Pub.d by R. Faulder New Bond Street, 1790.

holder. It is of the Doric order; and its ſhape is a parallelogram, extending from eaſt to weſt: it is two hundred and twenty-one feet long, and ninety-four broad. The exterior columns which ſurround it have no baſe; they are five feet eight inches in diameter, and thirty-two feet in height: in the circuit of this building there were formerly forty-ſix of theſe. Upon the frize of theſe columns ſome conſiderable remains of bas-reliefs are ſtill perceptible. Thoſe of the *Metopes*, repreſenting the battle of the Athenians againſt the Centaurs, are for the moſt part in good preſervation. The ſtatue of Minerva, which adorned the inſide of the temple, was conſidered a maſter-piece of art. It was made of ivory and gold; and the ornaments alone weighed upwards of forty talents. It was more valuable, however, on account of its exquiſite workmanſhip than its coſtly ornaments; for Phydias, in forming it, had even exceeded himſelf.

You next ſee two temples, ſeparated only by a partition wall. They are ſuppoſed to be thoſe of Neptune Erecteus, and of Minerva *Poliades*, or protectreſs of the town; the latter of which, among other curioſities, contained the folding ſeat of Dædalus, the inextinguiſhable lamp, and a valuable relic of the art of ſculpture in its infancy, a wooden ſtatue placed there by Cecrops, and which was ſtill to be ſeen in the days of Pauſanias. The famous olive tree which grew in this temple, having been burned by the Medes when they took Athens, is ſaid to have budded afreſh the ſame day to the height of two cubits. A traveller having obtained permiſſion

of the aga to dig in the temple of Erecteus, with a view to diſcover the well, the ſalt water of which, according to Pauſanias, was agitated by the ſouth wind like the waves of the ſea, and on the rock of which Neptune cauſed his trident to be carved out, they dug up two beautiful columns of ancient green marble, which are trod under foot, no one being at the trouble to elevate them.

The *Pandroſea* is a ſmall, but ſingular building, the entablature of which is ſupported by *canephores*, now entirely mutilated. From a paſſage in Pauſanias, we have reaſon to preſume that this monument was erected by the Athenians, in honour of thoſe virgins who reſided near the temple of Minerva Poliades, and who were conſecrated to the ſervice of that goddeſs. Theſe virgins were called *canephores*, that is to ſay, baſket-carriers, from a circumſtance which occaſioned them to be ſo employed during the feſtival of the goddeſs. The daughters of Cecrops, too, ſolicited this honour; but all except Pandora were ſo imprudent as to diſobey the command of the goddeſs. The Athenians, therefore, erected a temple in honour of her, near that of Minerva Poliades: no veſtiges of it are now to be ſeen.

At the foot of the citadel there are ſuperb marble ruins, ſuppoſed to have belonged formerly to the temple of Bacchus, in which tragedies and comedies were performed. The theatre was decorated with the ſtatues of Eſchylus, Euripides, Sophocles, and Menander. M. Le Roi ſays, it ſubſiſted in the days of Philip of Macedon.

Upon

Upon the hill which is to the ſouth-eaſt of the citadel, is the marble monument of Philopappus, a Roman conſul. This hill was called Muſeus, from the poet of that name, who was a diſciple of Orpheus, and who came hither to recite his verſes; and, indeed, it has a double title to this appellation, as, according to Pauſanias, it contained the ſepulchre of that poet.

From this place we went to view the temple of Theſeus, which is now at ſome diſtance from the town, though it formerly ſtood in the centre of it: it is almoſt entire, and built of the like marble, and in the ſame ſtyle of architecture as that of Minerva. The bas-reliefs of the frize and the metopes repreſent the battles of the Centaurs and the Lapithæ, together with the principal actions of Theſeus, and are for the moſt part in pretty good preſervation. You will doubtleſs expect to hear that I found within the picture mentioned by Pauſanias, and ſaid to have been a repreſentation of the combat of the Lapithæ and Centaurs, in which Theſeus killed one of the latter. There are indeed pictures, but very groteſque ones. Theſe ſacred walls have been covered with the images of ſaints, which I ſcarcely deigned to look at. I ſtopped, however, to read ſome characters inſcribed on them; but, to my great mortification, they contained only the names of ſome of thoſe travellers, who in vain ſeek for that immortality which flees from them.

To the ſouth-eaſt of the Acropolis there are ſeventeen fluted columns of the Corinthian order, ſix feet in diameter,

and

and ſixty feet high, which formed part of the pantheon built by Adrian. This pantheon contained one hundred and twenty columns, all of Phrygian marble; and the boxes were ornamented with the ſame. There were in it likewiſe apartments decorated with pictures and ſtatues, and cielings covered with alabaſter and gold. The temple contained the library and gymnaſium of Adrian, in which were one hundred columns of African marble.

The Ilyſſus, which uſually waſhes the bottom of the Muſeus, is at preſent dry. We neither ſaw the Lyceum, nor the temple of the Illyſſian Muſes, which was ſituated on its banks; but we were delighted to find the fountain *Callirrhoè*, which has its ſource in the bed of this river, and ſtill retains its ancient name. On the oppoſite ſhore we walked over the Stadium, the ſpot where the Panathenean games, that is to ſay, the races and public games of all Attica, were celebrated.

I. Stuart, del. Barrett sc.

The Ionic Temple on the Ilissus, at Athens, built of White Marble, vulgarly call'd S.t Mary on the Rock.

Pub.d by R. Faulder, New Bond Street, 1793.

I. Stuart. delin.t

O. Porter. sculp.t

The Monument of Lysicrates, commonly called the Lanthorn of Demosthenes at Athens.

Published by R. Faulder, New Bond Street, 1793.

LETTER XVIII.

Athens, July 1788.

NEAR the hoſpital of the French Capuchins there is a ſingular marble building, with ſix fluted pillars of the Corinthian order. It is built in the form of a lanthern; and the top is cut into ſcales, and terminates in a very whimſical ornament. It is called *to Fanari tou Demoſthenis*, or the lanthern of Demoſthenes; as it is ſuppoſed that the orator ſhut himſelf up here, that he might the better ſtudy the difficult and divine art of eloquence. The bas-reliefs, however, on the frize, which repreſent ſome of the actions of Hercules, ſeem to indicate that this monument belonged to that hero. It is now cloſe to an hoſpital of monks; we may therefore ſay, that chance often brings the moſt contradictory things together.

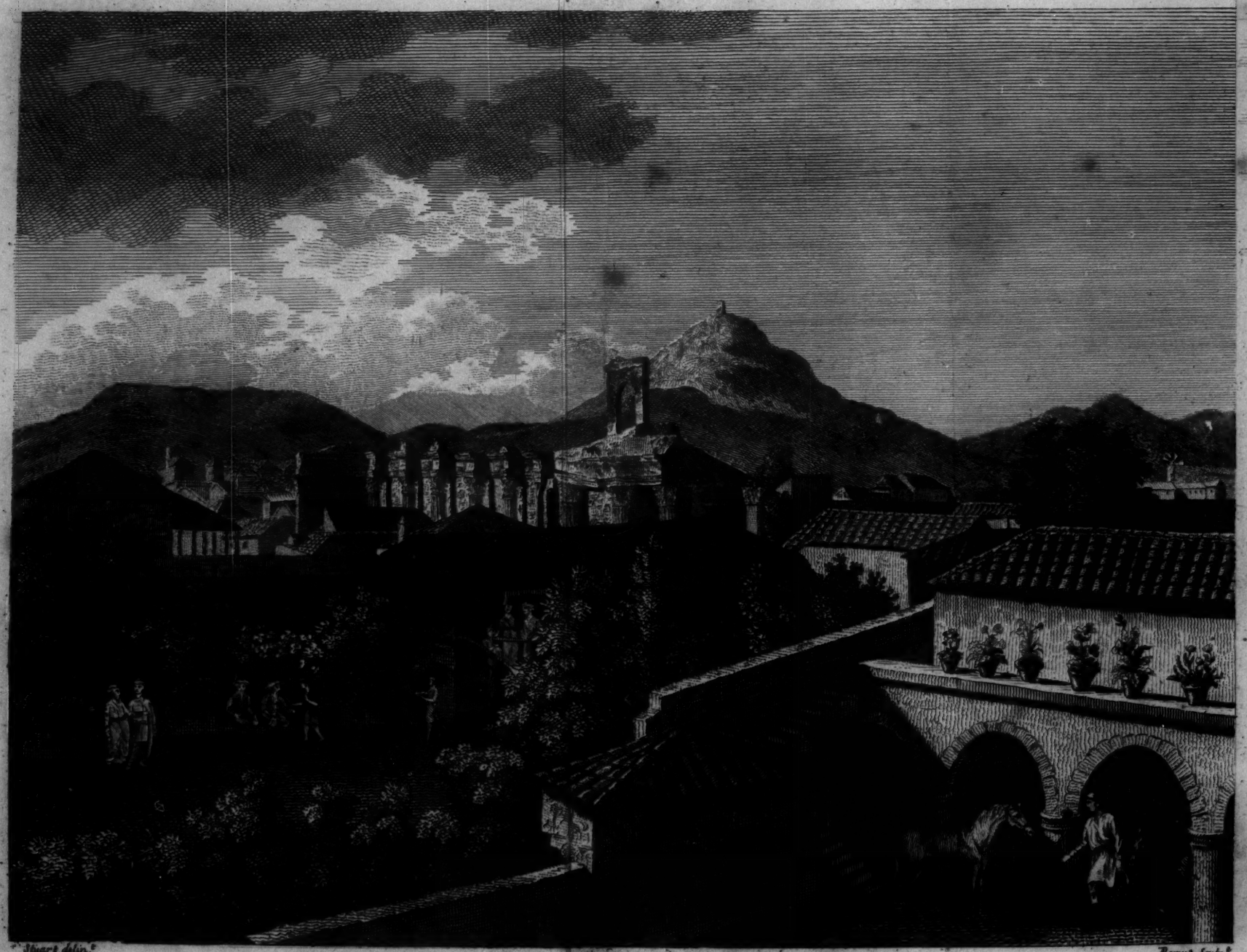
The tower *des Vento* is another curious edifice, conſtructed of marble, in an octagonal form. Andronicus Cyrrheſtes, by whom, as Vitruvius informs us, it was built, engraved on each of its faces the figure of a wind blowing from that particular quarter: theſe figures have large wings, but their cheeks are not puffed up. On this tower there was a ſmall pyramid, over which was a Triton of bronze, which, with a wand,

wand, pointed out the direction of the wind; the artiſt having contrived the figure in ſuch a manner, that it ſhifted according to its variation. On each ſquare was a ſun-dial, ſome lines of which are ſtill viſible. This building ſerves at preſent as an aſylum to ſome derviſes.

Near the *bazar*, or market-place, are the remains of a famous temple of the Olympian Jupiter, which was half a mile in circumference. The columns are large and beautiful: they are fluted, and of the Corinthian order. In the vicinity of this temple was the tomb of Deucalion, and the hole through which the waters of the deluge ſubſided: a conſecrated cake is every year thrown into it, in commemoration of this terrible event.

A little further ſtands the frontiſpiece of a temple, dedicated to Rome, and to Auguſtus, with fluted columns of the Doric order. To enumerate every thing here worthy of notice, would require long time; for, beſides theſe principal monuments, there are the remains of ſeveral temples; and on all ſides pillars, chapiters, inſcriptions, and bas-reliefs, which the Greeks uſually place at the top of their doors. M. Le Roi gives a very particular and ſatisfactory deſcription of them. We have him conſtantly with us, as well as Spon, and Pauſanias, who appears to us more intereſting than either; for, by tranſporting us back to antiquity, he has enabled us to diſcover various monuments by the poſition of their ruins, whereas the reſt ſerve only to deprive us of the pleaſure of conjecture.

The



Stuart, delin.t Barret, Sculp.t

A View of the Temple of Jupiter Olympius at Athens.

Published by R. Faulder, New Bond Street, 1798.

The ports of Athens are not now what they were formerly. *Phalerea*, which is almoſt three miles in circumference, has not a good bottom, and ſhips in it are obliged to keep at a great diſtance from each other. Munichia is now abandoned, becauſe it has no proper anchoring-ground. It is a mile and a half from the port of Phalerea, and two from Piræum; but by land the diſtance is leſs. Near theſe ports there are ruins; but it is not known of what buildings they are the remains. The entrance into Piræum is ſo narrow, that two frigates cannot paſs it abreaſt: it, however, has a good bottom, and is ſheltered on all ſides from the wind. It was capable of containing four hundred ſail, according to Strabo; and one thouſand, according to Pliny: a number which theſe writers, had they ſeen the ſize of our modern ſhips, would probably have conſiderably diminiſhed. We in vain ſought for the town of Piræum, its beautiful porticos, and the tomb of Themiſtocles. No traces whatever exiſt of thoſe long walls which joined Athens to Phalerea and Piræum. The fields interſected by the road to the port, and which were called the *Street of Pyræum*, inſtead of thoſe ſuperb buildings with which they were formerly embelliſhed, preſent to the modern traveller only corn, olive-trees, and vineyards.

The heat is ſo intenſe, and has fatigued me to ſuch a degree, that I am unable to accompany Mr. F—— to Eleuſis. I remain, however, highly pleaſed at Athens; and the only inconvenience I ſuffer, in this pure and ſerene climate, is the regret which I feel at being obliged to leave it.

LETTER XIX.

Athens, 1788.

THIS city had formerly thirteen gates, and was twenty-two Roman miles in circumference. It is probable that the Adrian arch conducted to that part of the town which was rebuilt by that emperor. Upon the portal is the following inſcription: "This is the city of Adrian, and not of The-"ſeus:" and on the ſide next the town, "This is Athens, "which was the city of Theſeus." The ſituation of this place, added to the magnificence of its buildings, which are almoſt all conſtructed of marble, muſt have rendered the view of it highly ſtriking, eſpecially on the ſea-ſide and towards the entrance from Piræum. In the flat country, rendered fertile by the Iliſſus and the Eridan, a rock riſes between two hills, the Muſæus and Mount Ancheſme, on the ſummit of which Cecrops built the town of Cecropia, changed afterwards into a citadel, in the happy days of Athens. The Acropolis was embelliſhed with the moſt beautiful monuments of art, amongſt which the temple of Minerva aroſe ſuperbly eminent, being then viſible, as it is now, from every avenue that conducted to the city; while nothing was to be ſeen on all ſides but temples, porticos, gymnaſia,

and

and theatres, containing an innumerable quantity of ſtatues; for of theſe 3000 were remaining even in the days of Pliny.

The mountains Parnes and Pentelicus, the one celebrated for bears and wild boars, and the other for its quarries, from which marble was procured to build the temples of Athens, are ſituated at a little diſtance from the city, the one towards the north, and the other towards the eaſt.

Mount Hymettus, which is a ſhort league to the ſouth-eaſt, contained formerly mines of ſilver: the honey produced on it was held in great eſtimation; and an ancient geographer remarks, that the beſt was to be met with near theſe mines. We purchaſed ſome of it which had the colour of gold. It will keep, it is ſaid, a long time, and is in great requeſt at Conſtantinople. This mountain was likewiſe famed for its quarries of ſtatuary marble, as well as for its ſilphium and its thyme.

We were naturally induced, by the poſition of Cecropia, to enquire the reaſon why the ancients built their towns on eminences. Plato and Thucydides, I think, have both treated of this ſubject. It is probable that the recent recollection of ſome deluge firſt gave riſe to this cuſtom; and when population increaſed, and this idea, together with the devaſtation it had occaſioned in the world, became effaced by time, men deſcended into the plains. They may, however, have made choice of riſing grounds, like the ſavages of modern times, with a view of defending themſelves with more eaſe in caſe of an attack. Perhaps, too, they were induced by the former

motive to build their temples on the higheſt mountains; though, according to the remark of an ancient writer, they may have done this with a view of approaching nearer to the gods, in order that their prayers might be the better heard.

The population of Athens has undergone great changes. When the Egyptian Cecrops ſettled in Attica, a thouſand years before the modern æra, and founded Cecropia, the number of its inhabitants amounted only to 20,000. The neceſſity of augmenting the ſtrength of this riſing colony, and of providing for its defence, cauſed the freedom of the city to be indiſcriminately granted to all who ſettled in it. In time, this privilege being aboliſhed, with that neceſſity which gave riſe to it, the inhabitants of Athens, in the days of Pericles, were leſs numerous than in thoſe of Cecrops: under the government of Demetrius Phalereus, there were 1000 more than under either. Beſides theſe, however, there were 10,000 foreigners, and 400,000 ſlaves. The latter cultivated the lands, contributed to the amuſement of the people, and were employed in the loweſt and moſt ſervile offices. Athens, at preſent, contains no more than 12,000 inhabitants, including the Turks, the number of whom is very ſmall indeed. The lands are now tilled by Greeks, who perform all kinds of labour, pay taxes to theſe Turks, contribute to their amuſement, and meet with nothing in return but oppreſſion and harſh treament.

The revolutions which have happened in the government of this place, are no otherwiſe important than as they ſerve to ſhew the influence which they ſucceſſively had on the character

character of the Athenians, as well as the glorious epoch when they were great in every reſpect. You, who read hiſtory, are not to learn, that Athens was at firſt governed by kings, then by the people, afterwards by the four hundred, then by the thirty tyrants, and then again by the people; after which it fell into the hands of the Romans: nor is it neceſſary for me to inform you, that it was only while the republican form of government exiſted among them, that theſe people excited the admiration and aſtoniſhment of the world. Some declaimers inveigh bitterly againſt Pericles, for having, as they ſay, encouraged the fine arts with no other view than to ruin the republic; and this calumny has been further propagated by many, whoſe talents qualify them only to repeat the thoughts of others. This taſte for elegance, however, having previouſly exiſted among the Athenians, Pericles, by encouraging it, did, in fact, no more follow the natural bent of his own genius, while he cultivated that of others: and what crime was there in this? Such things are formed, and develop themſelves, like the diamond in the bowels of the earth. Beſides, I leave to thoſe better acquainted with the ſubject, to decide what connection there is between the ruin of a country and encouragement given to the fine arts. But, as additional reaſons to prove that the Athenians were a degenerated people, they are repreſented as having been immerſed in luxury; and the number of their feaſts and courteſans is mentioned as a proof of this aſſertion. To theſe courteſans, however, Greece was indebted for the maſter-pieces of its ſculptors and painters, as

were

were its philoſophers and men of letters, for the mildneſs of their morals, and the elegance of their manners. Socrates, it is well known, was poliſhed by Aſpaſia; and Pericles, charmed by wit, made her his miſtreſs. Archeanaſſa of Colophon was beloved by the divine Plato, who even wrote verſes in her praiſe; and the tragedian Sophocles, tragic as he was, fell in love in his old age with the courteſan Theorida. Leontium converſed publicly with Epicurus in his gardens. Lais was at the ſame time the friend of the philoſopher Ariſtippus, the orator Demoſthenes, and the cynic Diogenes. She was ſo finely proportioned, that the painters, when they wiſhed to repreſent a beautiful boſom, always took hers for a model. Phryne furniſhed Apelles with a model of Venus riſing from the ſea, when, during the Cereales and feſtival of Neptune, in the face of all Greece, ſhe looſened her golden hair and purple robe upon the beach. It was during his connection with Gnide that Praxiteles executed his celebrated Venus of that name; and ſuch was his regard for this courteſan, that he offered her the choice of a ſatyr, or a moſt ſuperb cupid, with a curious inſcription on it, expreſſive of the ſculptor's regard for her; but ſhe made choice of the latter, and conveyed it to Theſpis, her native country. Two circumſtances reſpecting Phryne evidently ſhew, that in thoſe days the profeſſion of a courteſan, to which fate condemns ſo great a number of the fair ſex, was not branded with the ſame infamy as it is at preſent; and that theſe women amaſſed immenſe and almoſt

incredible

incredible fortunes. The firſt is, that a golden ſtatue of Phryne, executed by Praxiteles, was erected at Delphos, on a pillar of Penthelican marble. It was placed between Archidamus king of Sparta and Philip Amyntas, with this inſcription: "*Phryne of Theſpis.*" This occaſioned the cynic philoſopher Crates to ſay, "*Behold the fruits of Grecian intem-*
"*perance!*" The other is, that Phryne offered to rebuild the walls of Thebes, on condition that they ſhould bear the following inſcription: "*Phryne rebuilt theſe walls which Alex-*
"*ander deſtroyed.*" Theſe women were beheld in ſo favourable a light, that their lives and bons mots were recorded; for wit conſtituted a part of their profeſſion. Ariſtophanes of Byzantium reckoned upwards of one hundred and thirty in Athens: Apollodorus and Gorgias make them amount to a ſtill greater number; and Athenæus enumerates thoſe whom theſe authors had omitted, and relates ſome of their repartees. It was perhaps on account of their beauty that the Greeks were ſo indulgent towards them; for beauty was held in high eſtimation, as the following anecdote ſufficiently ſhews: Two women were propoſed in marriage to Archidamus of Sparta, the one beautiful and poor, the other ugly but rich. As the love of money is as old as the world, Archidamus thought proper to make choice of the latter. This conduct was blamed by the Ephori, who condemned the king to a cenſure, "*becauſe he thought rather of giving them puny kings than*
"*kings.*"

In regard to the luxury with which the Athenians are reproached,

proached, as being the occaſion of their ruin, I know not what to ſay. One thing is certain, that theſe reproaches are very ancient; for every age has produced ſnarling cynics, who, becauſe they themſelves are incapable of reliſhing the enjoyments of this life, are out of humour with every thing. The following is the defence made by an ancient in Athenæus to this charge: "It is the peculiar privilege of freemen, to in-"dulge in voluptuouſneſs and pleaſure; for, by theſe means, "the mind is refreſhed and expanded. Labour is the pro-"vince of wretches and ſlaves; and it tends to contract "and debaſe the ſoul. Luxury prevailed in Athens; but "thoſe who addicted themſelves to it, were the ſame who "conquered at the battle of Marathon, and defeated the in-"numerable armies of Aſia."

As the corruption of the Athenian character, however, is never mentioned without contraſting it with that of the Spartans, to which it is conſtantly oppoſed, it may not be amiſs to compare the reſpective excellencies of theſe two people, in order to determine to which the preference belongs. The Spartans deſpiſed riches, were temperate and frugal from habit, loved glory and their country, were obedient to the laws, and poſſeſſed the moſt heroic courage: but theſe people condemned deformed or puny children to death, on the idea that they could never make good ſoldiers; and as if it had been impoſſible for them to be uſeful in counſel, or in any other manner: they likewiſe treated their ſlaves barbarouſly, and were inſenſible to modeſty, filial tender-

neſs,

neſs, &c. The Athenians denied themſelves no pleaſure; they paid the ſame attention to a feaſt, or a play, as to their religious myſteries, or public aſſemblies; they were mild and humane; hoſpitable as well as generous, ſenſible and ingenious, amiable, induſtrious, and brave; for, to mention only one inſtance of their valour, it was this people that delivered Greece from the ſlavery of Xerxes. They, indeed, had their vices; for, in this world, there is no good without its concomitant evil: but, in my opinion, theſe vices were not only more tolerable than thoſe of the Spartans, but even preferable to the virtue of the latter, which in other words was brutality. Should you ſtill continue ſceptical on this point, conſult Thucydides, who has drawn a very favourable portrait of the Athenians, which is the leſs to be ſuſpected of partiality, as it was ſketched out by a Lacedemonian.

LETTER XX.

Athens, 1788.

IN reading hiſtory, nothing has ſtruck me more than the readineſs with which the ancients, and eſpecially the vulgar, adopted a certain opinion reſpecting the origin of man. They in general believed, that man, like plants, was produced by a ſtrange prolific effort of our common mother the earth, whoſe children they called themſelves. As every thing however is ſubject to change, this opinion afterwards gave place to others as well founded, and which have obtained equal credit. The Athenians, infected with this univerſal folly, ſtyled themſelves contemporaries with the ſun; and affirmed, that they ſprung from the boſom of that earth which they inhabited. For this reaſon, they wore in early times, according to Thucydides, golden graſhoppers in their hair, from a belief that the earth gave birth to theſe inſects.

The religion too of the Athenians, and of the Greeks in general, was of a very ſingular nature. Theſe ingenious people, whoſe imagination ſpurned the boundaries of nature, deified every thing, and by theſe means multiplied the brilliant phantoms of mythology. Without this happy eccentricity

of

of the human mind, the fine arts would probably have been neglected by the Greeks, and we ſhould conſequently have ſuſtained an irreparable loſs; for, if we have attained to any degree of perfection in theſe purſuits, we are undoubtedly indebted for it to them.

What I conſider as the moſt amiable feature in polytheiſm, and what in my opinion ſhould induce us to view it with the more indulgence, is, that while it flattered the imagination, without alarming the heart, it inſpired the moſt liberal toleration. In the days of Heſiod, the Athenians had upwards of 30,000 gods: they even then thought, however, that they had not a ſufficient number; for, after having admitted among their deities thoſe of every other nation, they erected, in the vicinity of Phalera, a temple to THE UNKNOWN GODS. St. Paul was deſirous of eſtabliſhing the Chriſtian religion in Athens; and it would doubtleſs have been tolerated there, had it been previouſly admitted and approved by the Areopagus. For this reaſon, he was cited to appear before the council to explain to them his doctrine: and, though he did not entirely gain his point, he made ſome proſelytes, notwithſtanding the inſipid ſarcaſms thrown out againſt him by the philoſophers. I am at a loſs to account, however, for his beginning his addreſs in theſe terms: "Athenians, you have erected a temple TO THE UNKNOWN GOD: *it is that God whoſe miſſionary I am.* The temple was dedicated to the *Gods*; which deſtroys the happineſs of the alluſion.

Even revelation itſelf has been unable to extinguiſh, in the modern Greeks, that powerful propenſity towards ſuperſtition which ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed their anceſtors. It is true, that, as every thing has degenerated among them, they have nothing now to ſet in competition with the Saturnalia and Cerealia, and thoſe numerous other feſtivals of old, no leſs grateful to the mind than to the heart. Yet the ancient toleration being left out of the queſtion, they ſtill retain many ſuperſtitious rites and ceremonies, which bear ſome affinity to thoſe of antiquity. What they may boaſt as excluſively their own, are frequent Lents and confeſſions, their paying paras for abſolution, and damning all thoſe who are not of the ſame religion as themſelves; and eſpecially the Latins and the Pope, whom they ſolemnly excommunicate once a year. To the temples of Theſeus and Minerva have ſucceeded thoſe of St. George and Panagia, whom they reſpect very much; though they are not a little diſcontented, if they do not grant them whatever they aſk. During the feſtivals dedicated to theſe ſaints, the ancient Bacchanalia are revived; for their ſole occupation then conſiſts in ſinging, dancing, feaſting, and praying. They pay the Turks a tax, which perhaps is more galling to them than the loſs of their liberty, for permiſſion to enjoy themſelves without reſtraint during this ſeaſon.

They believe in apparitions: and the prieſts, who do not leave them in quiet poſſeſſion of an opinion not unfriendly to

to their own intereſts. Their ceremonies reſpecting the dead are too ſingular and curious to be omitted. They waſh the body previous to interment. If it be a young girl, they crown it with a garland of flowers, and dreſs it in her beſt clothes. Mourners are appointed, whoſe office it is to pronounce an eulogium on the deceaſed; while the relations, diſſolved in tears, expreſs their grief by rending their clothes and tearing their hair: they even go ſo far as to deny themſelves reſt and food for ſome days. The ceremony is finiſhed by a repaſt, which the neareſt relation is obliged to give. This cuſtom is very ancient, as may be ſeen by the following paſſage of Lucian, who treats the ſubject with ſuch livelineſs of deſcription as is calculated to diſpel unneceſſary ſorrow. "They "put a piece of money into the mouth of the deceaſed to "pay the boatman, without conſidering whether it be coin "current in the country he is going to: beſides, I ſhould "think it better not to give any thing, that Charon might "be obliged to ſend him back again. Their next care is to "waſh the body—as though there were no water to be had "below, or that the perſon going was on his arrival to aſſiſt "at a feſtival: beſides this, they perfume the body, crown "it with flowers, and dreſs it in rich apparel, for the purpoſe, "I ſuppoſe, that it may not catch cold on the road; or leſt, "when it comes to its journey's end, it ſhould not be treated "with the reſpect due to its rank. All this is accompanied "with ſobbing and tears, lamentations and regret, in order

"to

" to keep time to a maſter of the ceremonies, who preſides " on the occaſion; and who enumerates paſt miſeries in a " melancholy ſtrain, with a view to extort tears from his " audience, ſhould they be unable to ſhed any without this " contrivance. Some of them begin to tear their hair, and " others to beat their breaſts, or ſcratch their faces. Others " again rend their clothes, and put duſt upon their heads, and " throw themſelves on the earth, or daſh themſelves againſt " the walls; ſo that the dead man ſeems to be the happieſt " of the whole group; for whilſt his friends and relations " are thus tormenting themſelves, he is placed aloft, waſhed, " cleaned, perfumed, and crowned, as if he were going on " a viſit. His father or mother, if he has any, then embrace " each other, with ſuch ridiculous lamentations, that, were " he capable of perception, he would be ready to burſt with " laughter." You may find the reſt in the chapter on mourning.

In returning towards the ſhip, we met on the road a reſpectable old man, who was ſmoking, and enjoying the freſh air under a tree. We took him for a ſhepherd belonging to ſome flocks in the neighbourhood: but in this we were greatly miſtaken; he was no leſs a man than the aga's brother, and chief of a little village near which we had juſt paſſed. The exceſſive heat, added to the need which we had of ſome refreſhment, obliged us here to halt; and though we were provided with proviſions, the conſul treated us with a pail of milk.

milk. We made a moſt delicious meal; but the old man would not partake of it, and even refuſed to taſte the wine which we offered him, though we were told he was no enemy to this liquor. The kind of ſaddle and ſtirrup made uſe of in this country is ſo inconvenient, and had fatigued me ſo much, that, at my arrival at Porto-Rafti, I found myſelf incapable of accompanying ſome of our gentlemen to Marathon.

LETTER XXI.

Smyrna, Auguſt 1788.

MIDSUMMER being over, the plague has now ceaſed; for this kind of putrid fever loſes its malignancy as the intenſe heat of the ſeaſon decreaſes. The Greeks have now forgotten that this contagion exerciſed its fury amongſt them, as one may ſay, only a moment ago; that it tore from their affectionate arms their friends and relations; that their own lives were divided between the deſpair excited by theſe loſſes, and the conſtant apprehenſion of falling victims themſelves to a ſimilar fate. They are now in high ſpirits: they dance, ſing, and play, and think only of enjoying the pleaſures of life; in which they do right. In the evening the air reſounds with the harmony of their voices attuned to muſical inſtruments, ſo that one would imagine their days paſs in a continual round of feaſting and merriment.

This town is ſituated at the foot of a hill, on the extremity of the gulf. The principal part of it, as in the days of Strabo, is built on a mountain, the other on the banks of the ſea. This geographer repreſents it as being formerly the moſt beautiful city in Aſia; and it is ſtill entitled to the ſame diſtinction.

tinction. The houſes, like thoſe throughout all Turkey, are conſtructed of wood, painted of different colours, and are generally only one ſtory high. Thoſe ſituated along the port, and inhabited by the Turks, are extremely pretty. They have *kioches*, or beautiful terraces, where the inhabitants meet every evening to enjoy the cool air. The moments they ſpend in theſe places are moſt delightful. For my part, I am in raptures with them. Loſt in an ecſtatic reverie, every preſent and paſt crowds forward to enchant the imagination. The ſtructure of the houſes; the dreſs of the ladies, their deportment, voice, figure, and even language, which I regret that I am not acquainted with; the purity and ſerenity of the atmoſphere; the various national ſtandards flying in the port; thoſe diſtant views, in which earth and ſky are brought together; but above all the *Meles*, a little rivulet at the end of the *rue des Francs*, on whoſe banks the prince of poets was born—that painter of nature, who ſtill charms us by his immortal pictures—all theſe together form to me a ſcene inexpreſſibly delightful.

The centre of the town is inhabited by Armenians and Jews; and the upper part by the Turks, whoſe houſes are here and there ſhaded by tall cypreſſes. On the gate of the old caſtle, which commands the place, and which was built by the Genoeſe, is a Greek inſcription not now legible. A coloſſal head is to be ſeen, ſunk into the wall; ſaid, but I will not vouch for the truth of it, to be that of the amazon Smyrna.

A little way in the country are the ruins of ſome ancient walls, called the bath of Diana.

The *beſeſteins* are large ſquare buildings conſtructed of free ſtone, with brick vaults for cielings. They were erected to preſerve the merchandiſe from fire; or from pillage, in caſe of a revolt. They contain a great number of warehouſes and ſhops, filled with gold and ſilver ſtuffs, muſlin, ſilk, cotton, goat-ſkins, carpets, furs, and even precious ſtones. Every *beſeſtein* contains one ſort of goods: the gates of them are ſhut before ſun-ſet, and are never opened during the Bayram. Theſe buildings deſerve attention, leſs on account of the infinite variety of merchandiſe which they contain, than of the diverſity of people who reſort to them. Jews, Turks, Greeks, Armenians, Catholics, and Proteſtants, flock together with one common deſign, it is true, of over-reaching one another; but with a ſpirit of toleration the more extraordinary, as their religions are the leſs calculated to inſpire it.

The ſtreets are very narrow and dirty. In ſome of them it is poſſible to ſtep from the windows of one houſe into thoſe of the oppoſite one. That of the Franks is pretty wide; but there is one in the Turkiſh diſtrict which is conſiderably wider. The number of inhabitants is eſtimated at 130,000. Of theſe there are 26,000 Greeks, 7 or 8,000 Armenians, 10,000 Jews, 4 or 5,000 Franks, and the Turks make up the remainder. The firſt of theſe are rajas, or tributaries to the grand ſeignor, who are dependent on his tribunals.

tribunals. The Franks here, as throughout all Turkey, acknowledge only their own conſuls. The country is governed by a cadi, who has under his command the *mouſſelin*, or lieutenant of police, and the captain of the janiſſaries. The cadi is a judge, who determines points of law and religion; but when theſe are doubtful they are referred to the mufti. As theſe offices are uſually obtained either by money or intrigue, and are ſeldom the reward of merit, it often happens that the cadi and the mouſſelin, inſtead of governing a country, think only of ruining it. The following paſſage in Herbelot's *Bibliotheque Orientale* ſeems to confirm the truth of this obſervation: "A doctor, having been made cadi of a "town, hired lodgings, when he firſt entered on his office, "at the houſe of the mouſſelin his lieutenant. This man gave "him during his ſtay the beſt reception in his power; and "treated him in every reſpect as a ſubaltern would do his "ſuperior: but being as yet ignorant of his name, he very "civilly aſked him what it was. The cadi anſwered, I have "the character of being a terrible fellow here, where I have "exerciſed the office of cadi; and am therefore known by "the name of the *azrael* cadi (Azrael is the name of the "angel of death, who, according to the oriental writings, "ſeparates the ſoul from the body). The lieutenant, on hearing this tremendous title, ſaid, And as for me, I am called "here *ſcheitan*, or *the devil*; it is ſurpriſing that our two names "ſhould ſo well accord together. We are here in a town, "the inhabitants of which are very wicked, not having the

" fear of God before their eyes. We will act therefore in " concert together; you in tearing the ſouls of the people " from their bodies (that is to ſay, in pillaging them by ava- " ricious extortions), and I by making them renounce their " faith, and plunging them into the depth of deſpair (by ex- " traordinary vexations)—otherwiſe we ſhall not gain our " ends." In other reſpects, the Turkiſh juriſprudence is ſubject to the ſame inconveniences as our own; ſo much are men every where alike. The ſame author relates the following inſtance: " Khedher Bey, ſurnamed Fadhel al " Roum, converſing with his friends on the difficulties which " ariſe in the exerciſe of judicature, one of the company " ſaid, In my opinion, the greateſt difficulty that occurs is, " when one of the parties is rich, and the other poor. " Khedher Bey replied, I find none in this caſe; for it is " clear, that the rich man will gain his cauſe, and the poor " man loſe it: but the great difficulty is, when both are " equally rich and powerful. If you, being a poor man, have " a law-ſuit with one who is rich and powerful, above all " things never go to the cadi; for he will not fail to con- " demn you. My advice is, that you ſhould inſtantly deſiſt " from your purſuit; or throw yourſelf at the feet of your " adverſary, from whom you will obtain more juſtice than " from the judge."

Moſques and ſynagogues are here very numerous. The Greeks have ſeveral churches, but the Armenians have only one. The Latins have two convents; one of Capuchins, and the other

other of Franciſcans. There is here a Greek, an Armenian, and a Latin biſhop. The Engliſh have neither biſhopric nor archbiſhopric; but they have an hoſpital for ſeamen. The ſtreet inhabited by the Franks is full of ſhops. The coffee-houſes are in the European ſtyle, and abound with every convenience. What renders them in a particular manner agreeable is, that the Italian, French, Dutch, German, Engliſh, Illyrian, and other languages are ſpoken in them, as they are reſorted to by the natives of all theſe countries. But what appears moſt ſtrange is, to find there Franciſcans, Capuchins, *caloiers*, *papas*, and *Turkiſh ſantons*, who, by the diverſity of their dreſs, and the variety of their opinions and characters, preſent at once, both to the eye and the mind, a contraſt equally ſtriking and fantaſtic. Such a ſpectacle is nowhere elſe to be met with.

The commerce of Aſia Minor is centred in Smyrna; a very flouriſhing trade being carried on by the Engliſh, Dutch, and French, with this city. The former of theſe ſend conſiderable quantities of cloth hither; and the French, beſides trading in this article, import cochineal, indigo, wine, liqueurs, ſweetmeats, pepper, cinnamon, cloves, ſilks, ſattins, ironmongery, &c. Italy ſends ſilks; Venice bruſhes, paper, and glaſs ware. Smyrna, in return, trades with every nation in the wool of the Angora goat, ſome of which is eleven inches long; ſtuffs made of it, Perſian ſilks, ſponges, carpets, opium, frankincenſe, hides, cotton both ſpun and raw, raiſins, figs, &c. There are conſuls here from Raguſa and Venice,

Venice, which likewiſe trade with this place, as well as from France, England, and Holland. Naples likewiſe ſends a conſul, though it has no trade with Smyrna.

The gulf is filled with ſhoals on the ſide next Eolia and Ionia, eſpecially towards that part commanded by the caſtle, which is at the diſtance of more than two leagues from the town; and in no condition to defend the paſſage from veſſels, which, on account of the flats, are obliged to come nearer to it. The Venetian ſhips anchor before this caſtle; for, ſince the laſt war which the Turks had with that republic, they have not been allowed to enter the bay, which is very ſpacious. There are at preſent two hundred veſſels in it, which on feſtivals never fail to diſplay their flags. They even ſometimes make the ſurrounding country reſound with the noiſe of their artillery. This bay abounds with fiſh; and great quantities of birds, eſpecially pelicans.

A wind blows every day at noon from the gulf, which is called *imbatto*. The ſea becomes then ruffled by degrees, till it riſes into high ſurges. The people of the country pretend that this wind cools the atmoſphere, and renders it healthy.

Pliny mentions an earth or chalk reſembling white lead, which was found at this place, in a field belonging to one Theodotus, from whom it took its name. He ſays, it was uſed to paint ſhips.

LETTER XXII.

Smyrna, September 1788.

IN conſequence of the arrival of ſome recruits, who are to be ſent to Conſtantinople when they amount to a ſufficient number, Franks, Jews, Armenians, Greeks, and even Turks themſelves, find it neceſſary to keep their ſhops ſhut, as theſe fellows make it a practice to enter any they ſee open, to rob them, and to demand money, which they even extort by force, no one being able to deny them any thing without the greateſt danger, and even without a riſk of loſing their lives. As no one is executed here in time of war, theſe people may commit every outrage with impunity. Though the ſhops are ſhut, they however find means to play tricks. One of them obſerving that an Armenian had a handſome gold watch, went up to him, and, aſking him what it was o'clock, ſnatched the watch from his hand; but he promiſed to reſtore it for thirty piaſtres, which he ſaid he was in great want of. The ſimple man counted out the money, and the recruit made off with both watch and money, which had well nigh coſt the Armenian his life.

An Italian merchant, who had formerly ill treated a Turk, has not dared to make his appearance ſince the latter has enliſted.

liſted. The Turk had threatened to be revenged on him; he has kept his word, and is determined to kill him. The merchant, alarmed at this menace, has abſconded, and cauſed money to be offered to the enraged Muſſulman: the latter, however, is inflexible. He ſays he is reſolved, in order to keep the reſt of the infidels in awe, to kill one who has preſumed to offend a true believer: but in this he conſults rather his paſſion than his intereſts; for he will ſhortly be obliged to depart, and then, no revenge, no money.

The environs of this city are charming: they abound with villages, and country-houſes belonging to the Franks, Greeks, and Turks, which are occaſionally interſperſed with vines and cypreſſes, altogether forming a moſt delightful retreat. The gardens are cultivated by Greeks with very little labour; for theſe people need only to turn up the earth, and it almoſt ſpontaneouſly produces whatever they wiſh. The only ripe fruits which you can procure here, are grapes and figs, both of which are of a ſuperior quality. No peaches, apricots, or good pears are to be had here in a ſtate of maturity, for the following reaſon. When a Turk enters a garden, he takes the beſt fruits without paying for them; or, if he does pay, he gives much below their real value. The Greeks, therefore, in order to avoid this inconvenience, as well as the puniſhment they would ſuffer in caſe of a refuſal, gather and ſell them before they are ripe. How much are theſe people to be lamented, in being ſubjected to ſuch rapacious tyrants!

Yeſterday

Yeſterday afternoon a ſhock of an earthquake was felt here. The ſky was on a ſudden overcaſt, and a heavy rain enſued, which continued for upwards of two hours. In a little time after the ſtorm ceaſed, to the great relief of the Greeks, who being always terrified by theſe events have recourſe to *Panagia*.

LETTER XXIII.

Smyrna, 1788.

FOR ſome days paſt the Turks have been celebrating the feſtival of the *Kutchuk*, or Little *Bayram*, which falls eight weeks after that of the *Burick*, or Great Bayram: theſe are the two principal feſtivals they have in the whole year. They have ſacrificed on this occaſion a great number of ſheep, the greater part of which had gilded horns: this cuſtom is very ancient in the eaſt.

I ſaw ſome camels here to-day for the firſt time. Theſe animals, whoſe figure ſhocks our ideas of proportion, are, however, very ſerviceable to man. You doubtleſs know, that they carry conſiderable burdens; that they kneel down to receive their load, and riſe when they are ſufficiently laden; and that they can endure hunger and thirſt a long time, being capable of travelling two days together without either eating or drinking. What appears ſtill more ſurpriſing is, that they can diſcover water under ground, and ſmell it at a conſiderable diſtance. A celebrated ancient hiſtorian ſeems to aſcribe the like quality to other animals; for he ſays, that wild aſſes found water by the ſame means; and adds, that ſome perſon availed

availed himſelf of this diſcovery to acquire merit. In this manner men have been always impoſed on.

A circumſtance occurred to-day, which confirms me more and more in the bad idea I entertain of the Turks. One of them was walking upon the beach near ſome Engliſh ſailors, who were filling their caſks with water; and though he obſerved his children, who accompanied him, throwing ſtones every now and then at the ſeamen, he was ſo far from checking, that he encouraged them in this amuſement. This conduct, however, was not ſuffered to remain unpuniſhed; for he received a blow from one of the ſailors, which brought him to the ground. As there is always a number of people on the quay, the ſailor ſoon loſt ſight of the Turk, and returned to join his companions. An Engliſh marine, ignorant of what had paſſed, was walking ſlowly behind. The enraged Turk ran towards him with a piſtol in his hand (for in war time every body here carries arms, which they are forbidden to do in time of peace), and was on the point of firing it, when a French merchant, ſettled in the country, laying hold of him, aſked him, in the Turkiſh language, why he wiſhed to commit murder? The Turk made no reply; and the marine, now becoming ſenſible of his danger, made his eſcape, without even thanking his deliverer, whom he left engaged with the Turk, who ſeemed now deſirous of wreaking his whole vengeance on him. Finding however that he had to do with a powerful man, and that he could not eſcape from him, the Turk began to cry out, Haſten, true be-

lievers! haſten, faithful ſervants of Mahomet! come and behold the inſult with which an infidel is treating one of your brethren!—The populace immediately ruſhed upon the poor Frenchman, and were about to exerciſe their religious ferocity againſt him, when a venerable old man of ſome diſtinction, piercing the crowd, addreſſed them as follows: "Leave this honeſt merchant, who has committed no other "crime than that of preventing a man from ſhedding inno- "cent blood. I have been a ſpectator of the whole tranſac- "tion." They then ſtopped: the nobleman made an addreſs in behalf of the Chriſtian; and, after reproaching the Turk with his baſeneſs, carried his civility ſo far as to attend the merchant home. I am juſt informed that this nobleman is one of thoſe whoſe great riches make them dread the bowſtring. There are many in the ſame predicament; but they always find means to keep at a diſtance the fatal emiſſaries.

LETTER XXIV.

Smyrna, 1788.

THE Levant is the country of empirics; for every ſtranger in it, who pretends to be a phyſician, is always well received. He then acquires the right of murdering his fellow-creatures with impunity, and is liberally rewarded for it. There was formerly a great number of theſe quacks, or at leaſt it appears ſo; for whenever the Turks ſee a Franc, they take him either for a phyſician or a merchant. At preſent an Italian and a Frenchman have the precedency of their rivals, becauſe they are both very impudent and very proud, and talk as much as quacks endowed with ſuch qualities can do. Empirics of both theſe nations, who in their own country would be hardly qualified to ſhave any poor wretch, who by miſery might be compelled to employ ſuch pitiful ſcrapers, aſſume here airs of the utmoſt importance, while gold flows like torrents into their pockets. In this they are undoubtedly right: thus goes the world, which is divided between two deſcriptions of men, knaves and fools. The latter are not a match for the former, who have ſenſe enough to ſee this, and villany enough to take advantage of it as a principle

ciple which directs their conduct. The Greeks never apply to any ſtudy, for they are better employed: they ſing, they pray, and they dance; and all this amuſes and recreates their minds. Few of them, therefore, can attend properly to phyſic; and they have not a ſingle able phyſician among them.

Smyrna is a pleaſant ſpot to a foreigner who travels either for inſtruction or amuſement, as agreeable ſociety is to be met with, both in the town and the country, where diverſions of every kind may be found. The conſuls and merchants every night give *avant-ſoupers*, in which the charms of ſocial intercourſe are heightened by thoſe of dancing and ſinging. The women of quality here, unite the character of faithful wives to that of tender mothers: you would believe them to be the ſame that Homer has deſcribed. Their chief employment is embroidery, in which they excel. Several of the young ladies draw neatly; and the greater part of them play on the forte piano, or the guitar. Beſides their own language they ſpeak French, and ſome of them underſtand Engliſh and Italian. Mrs. B. who has travelled a good deal, is miſtreſs of both theſe languages. It is difficult to ſay, whether ſhe poſſeſſes more ſenſibility or wit. Metaſtaſio, who knew her at Vienna, found many charms in her converſation, and had a great eſteem for her. This poet made her a preſent of his works, to which ſhe is ſo paſſionately attached that ſhe has learnt the fineſt paſſages by heart. Her talents, however, have not inſpired her with that vanity and ſelf-

ſelf-ſufficient air ſo inſufferable in moſt women who dabble in literature. In what terms am I to deſcribe her ſiſters? They poſſeſs both beauty and wit, two powerful taliſmans which never fail to charm; and whoever viſits theſe ladies, muſt conſequently become enamoured of them. The Miſs W—— are all amiable young ladies. Modeſty and the graces ſeem in them to have peculiar attractions. A Miſs Am——, whoſe name is expreſſive of the paſſion ſhe inſpires, without being beautiful poſſeſſes a *je ne ſcai quoi* which faſcinates more than beauty itſelf. Her paleneſs, the mild radiance of her fine eyes, and her air tending to a ſoft melancholy, but too well announce the ſenſibility of her heart. Not to love her, one muſt never have ſeen her. And who would not be captivated by the vivacity of Miſs B——?

The picturesque dreſs of the Greeks ſerves as a relief to their beauty. Their mode of confining the boſom, however, does not prevent it from riſing to the ſight, which reminds me of theſe two verſes of Dante:

Vedeanſi le lor poppe a dondoloni
Uſcir del ſen che parean ventri vani.

In general they have very large breaſts; and I am ſurpriſed that, among the many things they inherit from their anceſtors, they have loſt the ſecret of preventing their growth. Dioſcorides, lib. v. ſays, that, for this purpoſe, the ancients made uſe of a ſtone, found in the iſland of Naxos, which, when pulveriſed, was applied to the breaſt. They ſtill inherit from their

anceſtors

anceſtors their cuſtom of painting the face as well as the eyebrows, and adopt the like colours, necklaces, jewels, &c. They retain likewiſe the zone or embroidered girdle, which they often faſten with a ſparkling buckle of precious ſtones. Their winter dreſſes are very coſtly: they are of a gold cloth, lined with ermine, or with other furs equally expenſive, and coſt ſometimes three hundred piaſtres. This is carrying luxury to a great extent: but it muſt be acknowledged, that faſhion does not very often require dreſs to be changed. On the contrary, ſo little do they affect variety in this reſpect, that the women of Chio chooſe rather to carry an unwieldy burden, and appear hump-backed, than to acquire an unconſtrained and eaſy air, by renouncing their ancient modes: ſo much is ſuperſtition connected with attachment in theſe matters. As to the head-dreſs, it is not uniform; ſome wearing a part of their hair twiſted, and pendent over their cheeks; while that of others is ſuffered to flow negligently around their ſhoulders: ſome tie it in a knot, and ornament it with flowers, precious ſtones, and heron feathers. When they go abroad, they cover their faces with a white veil trimmed with gold fringe, and are uſually followed either by their ſlaves or female ſervants. The Turks make a point of reſpecting their modeſty. The young girls, who always remain at home, are employed either in embroidery, or in looking through lattices at the paſſengers: they are allowed to go out only on days of feſtivity, and even then they muſt

go

go at an early hour, in order that they may not be ſeen. I made the ſame remark at Athens; but ſome here do not carry their rigour in this reſpect ſo far.

A cuſtom prevalent throughout the Levant, which ſome find very uſeful and convenient, is that of limited marriages. They are common among the Turks, as well as the Chriſtians; and the huſband engages to the woman by a written promiſe, authoriſed by the cadi, to keep her for a certain ſpecified time, under the penalty of forfeiting a ſtipulated ſum of money.

LETTER XXV.

Dardanelles, Oct. 25, 1788.

OUR departure from Smyrna has coſt us tears. The apprehenſion of never beholding it again, has attached us the more ſtrongly to this city, towards which our looks are ſtill directed. Adieu, Chloris! adieu, Sylvia! adieu, perhaps, for ever. Again we ſee Tenedos and Troy. A ſullen ſilence, which is eloquently pathetic, reigns around them. Cape *Janiſſary* in Phrygia is the ancient promontory *Sigeum*, the arſenal and port of the Achaians. Something like a tomb is to be ſeen here. I wiſh it may not be that of Hector, or of Patroclus and Antilochus. Perhaps it is that of Achilles. Right—ſomebody told me that it had been lately diſcovered by the aſſiduity of Mr. de Ch——. After paſſing this cape, we perceived a large caſtle ſituated on a river, which is the Scamander, called by the ancients Xanthus; it takes its ſource in mount Ida, and, joining the Simois in a valley, diſcharges itſelf into the Helleſpont—that ſea in which the unhappy Helle was drowned, in her attempt to convey the golden fleece to Colchis with her brother Phryxus. On the Greek

Greek cape of the Thracian Cherſoneſe, or Promontory of Maſtuſia, there is likewiſe a village and a caſtle built oppoſite to each other by Mahomet IV. to defend the entrance of the ſtraits of Gallipoli, which are here a league and one-third in width. This we are now paſſing; and have already entered the ſtraits, in ſpite of a ſhot fired at us from the caſtle on the European ſide, from a ſuſpicion only that ours may be a Ruſſian veſſel. As we advance up, the ſtrait grows narrower; and, though we are more than thirty leagues from mount Athos, we have not yet loſt ſight of its ſummit, covered with ſnow. Dardanea, from which the Dardanelles ſeem to derive their name, was probably ſituated there; for the cape, which forms a hollow, muſt be the *Promontorium Rheteum* where Ajax's tomb was placed. We draw near to the two caſtles of the Dardanelles, and the villages; and are come to anchor at Abydos, in Phrygia minor, called by the Turks *Aidos*.

Night is now come on; and a light which we ſee from a town, reminds us of the ſignal of Hero. The noiſe of the ſea, which by its murmurs ſeems to bemoan the love and the death of Leander, ſerves to increaſe the illuſion. We are going to read the poem of Muſeus on the ſubject. It is pleaſing thus to meditate upon the heroes of antiquity, on the very ſpot celebrated by the poets.

LETTER XXVI.

Dardanelles, Oct. 27, 1788.

I DINED to-day with a friend at the Engliſh conſul's, who is a Jew. There are none but Turks and Jews in the village; and it is through the medium of the latter that the Franks tranſact all their buſineſs here, and in general throughout all the Levant. They are the conſuls, or at leaſt the vice-conſuls, and interpreters of all nations. The conſul preſented his daughter to us, who is likewiſe his nephew's wife. She walked barefooted, and wore a large necklace of Turkiſh ſequins, which hung down over her breaſt. Deſtitute of beauty, of elegance, or wit, ſhe ſmiled from time to time; and theſe ſmiles gave us reaſon to think that ſhe had a ſoul, a point reſpecting which her firſt addreſs had made us ſomewhat dubious. As the place of honour is here the corner of the ſopha, my friend was obliged to accept it; but he was not on that account much more at his eaſe. Roſaſolis was ſerved up to us in a very ſmall glaſs; and afterwards a copper-tinned diſh was placed on a ſtool a foot high: they then gave us plates, knives and forks, and a napkin: the Jews,

Jews, as uſual, did without them; and what to me appeared very ſingular, they had put a cloth under the ſtool. The dinner was very frugal, and concluded with *pilau*, which the conſul and his children ate with wooden ſpoons from the ſame plates they had made uſe of during the whole repaſt. Theſe young people, out of reſpect for their father, were ſeated in the alcove. The mother and daughter did the honours of the houſe, and even ſerved us at table. A great number of ſmall plates, containing dried grapes without ſtones, which are brought from Smyrna, preſerved wild plums, and the ſeeds of ſage, which grows in the iſlands of the Archipelago, Aleppo piſtachios, which are very much eſteemed, grey peas, better parched than thoſe of Sicily, as they are ſoaked before they are put into the ſhovel, &c. were ſerved up by way of deſſert. Though we had none but excellent old Dardanelle wine, the Jews would not taſte it. When our repaſt was finiſhed, the young lady poured water on our hands, and then ſerved up coffee. Formerly the Jews uſed not to touch any diſh from which a ſtranger had eaten. At preſent they intermix with people of all perſuaſions, though they have not laid aſide their ſuperſtition; but they find it advantageous to be ſociable.

The Jews live in a ſeparate diſtrict. The conſul's houſe is genteelly furniſhed; the ſophas are covered with damaſk, ornamented with gold fringe. The windows are of coloured glaſs, with which Venice ſupplies all the Levant. There are lattices in ſeveral rooms, through which one can ſee every thing

thing that paſſes in the great hall. I aſked if theſe were made with this intention, but I was told that they were not. This I can ſcarcely believe, when I conſider the ſuſpicious temper of theſe people.

Yeſterday we traverſed the plain of Abydos, where Xerxes drew up his army in order of battle, that he might have the pleaſure of ſeeing it file off; at which he was ſo much affected, that, king as he was, he cried when the review was over. From the top of a ſuperb building of white ſtone, he beheld the continent covered with his ſoldiers, and the Helleſpont with his ſhips. This view at once threw him into aſtoniſhment, rapture, and tears, which occaſioned the following reproach from his uncle, Artabanes: "Your actions, mighty "prince, are not uniform; for in one moment you paſs from "exceſſive joy to exceſſive ſorrow." Xerxes replied, "I "cannot refrain from entertaining ſentiments of pity, when "I reflect on the brevity of human life; for of ſo many men "whom I now behold, not one will be alive one hundred "years hence." "But are we not," replied Artabanes, "ex-"poſed during our lives to many accidents more worthy of "commiſeration? Is there a ſingle individual of all theſe, "or of the whole human race, who, in the ſhort career of "life, would not rather have died than lived? The perpe-"tual calamities and miſeries from which no one is exempt, "ſo embitter the happieſt of our days, that life, though really "ſhort, ſeems of a terrible length; and death is the only "relief to which unhappy mortals can look forward."

Xerxes,

Xerxes, who, like all ſovereigns, in whoſe minds reflections of this nature remain no longer than their vanity is intereſted in them, then ſaid: "Since the condition of man is ſuch as "you deſcribe, let us ceaſe to reflect upon it; far be every "melancholy idea from us; and let us think only of the "brilliant ſucceſs we have in view," &c. together with other extravagancies, which you may find in Herodotus, from whom this paſſage is taken.

There is a great deal of game on the mountains; we met with hares and partridges every ſtep we took. The Turks are pious Gymnoſophiſts: they ſpare theſe animals, which is more than they would do a Chriſtian, if they could murder him with impunity.

The frigate having obtained leave from the grand ſignor to go to Conſtantinople, it became neceſſary to ſhew the *firman* to the commandants of the two caſtles. We went firſt with the conſul to the *mollah* to get it ſigned by him. This man very ingeniouſly begged us to inform him, whether the maker of thoſe beautiful double cryſtal cups, which were formerly brought from England, was dead, as none of them, he ſaid, had been ſeen here for ſome time; he concluded, by aſking us for a teleſcope, or a china or glaſs cup. The lieutenant replied, that all theſe ſort of things had been broken in a ſtorm. As we were departing, the Jew told us that we had ſat too near the *mollah*, which was not proper. In this he was right; for we did him too much honour in ſitting with him under the ſame alcove. We determined, however,

however, not do ſo at the houſe of the commandants, but to ſit oppoſite to them during our viſit. Abraham perceived, and gave us credit for our docility.

The commandant of the Aſiatic caſtle is an old man, who ſtruggled ſo much with deafneſs, blindneſs, ſickneſs, and death, that the Jew had a great deal of difficulty to make him comprehend the motive of our viſit. He took up the firman, clapped a pair of ſpectacles upon his big noſe, and tried five or ſix times to read it. The poor wretch, however, whether he could not ſee, or either could not or had forgot how to read, was unable to underſtand it. All this time the Jew was making game of him; but foreſeeing that he would be able to make nothing of it, he adopted the expedient of reading it to him, in the preſence of one of his ſervants. The ſalute the caſtle was to pay to the frigate on her paſſing was mentioned. The commandant, who never opened his mouth without giving riſe to reflections on death, replied in a faultering tone, that he ſhould diſcharge his duty, if he received a handſome preſent. This the Jew managed in the beſt manner he could; and it is to be preſumed, that he did not forget himſelf. Every thing being now ſettled, we reimbarked to go to the commandant of the European caſtle at *Sextus*, which was formerly the moſt conſiderable town in the Cherſoneſus, and which at preſent is but a mean village. Though the caſtles are only two miles apart, we had a good deal of difficulty to get over from the one to the other; for, owing to the narrowneſs of the ſtrait

in

in this place, the current is very rapid. This commander was a fine fellow, and more learned than the former; for, upon receiving the firman, he, without ceremony, gave it to one of his ſervants, frankly acknowledging that he had never been taught to read. He ſeemed to wiſh that we ſhould make him a preſent of a piece of cloth; but he was highly pleaſed when given to underſtand that he was to touch a good ſum of piaſtres, and promiſed to acquit himſelf of his duty to our ſatisfaction. He requeſted us to give him (for theſe people always aſk) a knife, a penknife, and a pair of ſciſſars. It muſt be allowed that under commanders ſo little attached to money, and ſo very much aſhamed to confeſs it, the place muſt be impregnable. We ſaw ſeveral Chriſtian ſlaves at work in the caſtle: theſe are the emperor's ſoldiers, whom the Turks have made priſoners of war. When they were firſt brought hither, they were ſuffered to walk about, and employed in eaſy labour; but three or four having made their eſcape, the reſt are become ſuſpected, and have conſequently been put in irons.

On our return to the Aſiatic village, I landed at the caſtle with the conſul, who was ſeverely reprimanded by one of the officers for having brought a Frank into it in time of war. The great guns are of braſs, and ſeem to be formed of two pieces joined together with ſcrews: they are on a level with the water, and fixed upon old carriages. The bore of them is almoſt a foot and a half in diameter; and they are loaded

with bullets of granite, which, as I am aſſured, weigh upwards of one hundred pounds. There are likewiſe culverins, which carry balls of ſixty pounds. But the time which muſt neceſſarily be required to load theſe guns, added to the difficulty of working ſuch cumbrous artillery, eſpecially when we conſider the unſkilfulneſs of the Turks, ſeems to me to render it in a great meaſure uſeleſs, ſince it would be unable to make but one diſcharge: and conſequently, if an enemy were willing to ſacrifice a part of his fleet to the firſt fire, and had the wind in his favour againſt the current, he would have very little to fear. If to this be added, the ſituation of theſe caſtles, which ſeem placed rather to deſtroy each other than to defend the paſſage, it will be obvious how eaſily it might be forced. On this you may the more ſafely rely, as theſe obſervations agree with the joint remarks of connoiſſeurs and non-connoiſſeurs on the ſubject, which is a proof of their being founded in truth.

I afterwards went to the conſul's houſe, to ſettle ſome little accounts. The queſtion was, what we were in his debt. He made out the account, then made it out again; and, thinking that he had made a miſtake not to his own advantage, he began it afreſh with more eagerneſs than ever. His wife, brother, and children, finding that the amount was ſtill uncertain, began to calculate likewiſe. They were all loſt in reflection: when ſpoken to, they made no reply; for their ſouls, fixed on the loſs of a ſingle para, rendered them incapable

pable either of ſeeing or hearing. At laſt the ſum was ſettled: we then paid it; and, having made our preſents, joy ſeemed to beam forth on their countenances.

I ſaw ſome Turkiſh noblemen on a ſpacious plain, amuſing themſelves at the *gerida*. This is a game to which they are much attached, and which I had not leiſure to obſerve at Smyrna. They were on horſeback, and divided into two parties, each being provided with a ſtick two feet long, which they darted at each other; and afterwards picked it up with an agility no leſs ſurpriſing, than the dexterity with which they threw themſelves on the neck of the horſe in order to avoid their adverſaries blow, who always made a feint at one to get a blow at another. Amongſt the ſpectators drawn together by this amuſement were ſome derviſes dreſſed in white felt, with cowls and long tunics. They wore large amber taliſmans about their necks, which they look upon as preſervatives, not only againſt witchcraft, but likewiſe againſt ſwords and bullets; and, ſeemingly by way of further precaution, they wore piſtols, and a poniard in their girdle.

LETTER XXVII.

Conſtantinople, Nov. 15, 1788.

A FURIOUS north wind, which has laſted for ſome days, having at length abated, the frigate has paſſed this ſame ſtrait, croſſed by Xerxes three thouſand years ago, on a bridge of ſeven hundred boats, with an army of I know not how many millions (for Herodotus fails me), to go and ſubdue Greece; in which, however, he miſcarried. The Turks paſſed it long after, but with more ſucceſs; for they penetrated beyond the Danube, and reduced under their authority all the intermediate country. The two caſtles ſaluted us with guns loaded with ball; and the bullets making ducks and drakes in the water, ſlightly grazed the frigate, and at laſt dropped near the villages. The two ſhores ſwarmed with people; and the frigate returned the ſalute when ſhe got between the two forts.

The Helleſpont, Xerxes, Leander, and Hero! What a contraſt in the emotions excited by theſe names! and how much is the fate of Leander to be envied! Thy grandeur, Xerxes, was but vapour; for, a prey to ambition, thou wert incapable

incapable of any ſolid enjoyment! But Leander is loved; and his paſſion conſtituted the happineſs of his life. Theſe ideas occur ſo naturally in this voyage, that every one of us, at the moment, felt love to be ſuperior to ambition.

To the right of Abydos is a fine garden, in which ſtands a pretty houſe, ſurrounded with cypreſs trees, belonging to the captain pacha. Beyond Setus, to the left, is a large Greek village called *Mayta*, the ancient *Madytos*. The *Propontides* ſoon after appeared to the north, in the opening of which is Gallipoli: this is the firſt town which the Turks took in Europe, under Amurath I. Oppoſite to this is Lampſacus in Aſia Minor, ſo celebrated formerly for its wine, that Xerxes, on that account, gave it toThemiſtocles. It was called Priapus, that god being worſhipped here. This was the country of Metrodon, the companion of Epicurus, who reſided here himſelf a long time. We now deſcry the iſland of Marmara, which gives its name to the ſea formerly called *Propontides*. It is the iſland of Cyrica or Proconneſſus: it was formerly joined to the continent by means of two bridges. But Byzantium now preſents itſelf to our view.

It is impoſſible for me to deſcribe the impreſſion I felt on the firſt ſight of Conſtantinople. As this city is built upon ſeven hills, riſing gradually and inſenſibly above each other till they terminate on the ſhores of the Boſphorus, it appears like a town that has a beginning, but no end. Superb moſques, ornamented with domes and lofty minarets (the moſt diſtinguiſhed of which, that of St. Sophia, has ſerved

as a model to the reſt), riſe above the houſes, whoſe varied colours of red, white, and black, are agreeably broken by the cypreſs trees, which ſeem to ariſe out of the centre of the buildings. To this picture add that of the ſeven towers, and the ſeraglio, whoſe cupolas, as well as the pyramid of the divan, are covered with lead, and terminate in gilded balls, the brightneſs of which is heightened by the lofty trees that ſurround them. The ſeraglio ſeems to be joined to Aſia, and to extend along the ſhore where Scutari now ſtands, on the ſcite which was formerly occupied by Chryſopolis, or the city of gold.

This proſpect is ſo ſtriking, that the eye cannot long remain fixed upon it without being dazzled; ſo that an obſerver is obliged to turn towards the neighbouring fields, which nature ſeems to have formed on purpoſe to relieve the ſight.

LETTER XXVIII.

Conſtantinople, Nov. 16, 1788.

IT was not without ſome ſort of ſatisfaction that we found ourſelves benighted and becalmed before the ſeven towers; for the ſun, before he quitted the horizon, had ſo gilded Conſtantinople, that our ſight failed us by continually looking at it. The moon, however, ſoon came to reſtore light to the earth; the heavens were not obſcured by a ſingle cloud; the deep ſilence of nature was interrupted only by the ſoft zephyrs which gently fanned our ſails, and the noiſe of the dolphins which ſported around the veſſel. Every thing invited us to take a ſecond view of Conſtantinople, which ſeemed now to have aſſumed a ſilver tint. We could have gazed for ever on this ſuperb city without being tired. Our eyes were ſometimes fixed on the ſeraglio, which we beheld with ſecret emotions of jealouſy mixed with pity: ſometimes, and not without intereſt, we directed them to the ſeven towers; and at others, we turned them with pious veneration towards the moſques, which we took all for St. Sophias. Reſt became at length neceſſary: ſleep, with its enchantments, ſtole upon us to aid theſe ſcenes; and we awoke in the port of Conſtantinople.

What

What ſurpriſe! what aſtoniſhment! We found ourſelves in a lake, whoſe boundaries were Europe and Aſia, without knowing how we had entered it. What a noble proſpect! On its banks are Conſtantinople, Pera, and Scutari: the intermediate ſpaces are filled with villages, gardens, and neat country houſes. We found the more difficulty in diſpelling this charming illuſion, as the entrance into the port cannot be ſeen from the place where we have anchored. The water is covered by a prodigious number of boats, for the moſt part varniſhed and gilt. They are filled with perſons of both ſexes, whoſe eaſtern dreſs muſt appear pleaſing in the eye of a foreigner: they cut the ſea with aſtoniſhing rapidity, eagerly contending which ſhall be foremoſt. The boats of the *Boſtangi* form a kind of variety which contributes to make the ſcene more pictureſque, the robes and ſingular caps worn by theſe people being of a very bright and lively ſcarlet colour.

I have been on ſhore: what a diſagreeable contraſt! The ſtreets are narrow, dirty, and full of cats and dogs. The Turks are not ſo ferocious as they were repreſented to me, notwithſtanding the preſent ſtate of war, which often renders them little diſpoſed to diſcharge the duties of hoſpitality.

The foreign ambaſſadors and envoys are very attentive to travellers: two of them in particular, more ſo than the reſt, are Sir R—— A—— the Engliſh ambaſſador, and Comte de L—— envoy from Naples. The former is well verſed in the

the character of the Turks, and has neglected nothing to gain their affections; in which he has ſucceeded. His converſation, therefore, will make one better acquainted with the manners of the Turks than all the books publiſhed on the ſubject. This gentleman is of an amiable, cheerful, and magnificent diſpoſition. He has formed a very fine collection of ſcarce medals. Count de L——— is no leſs amiable, and will leave laſting ſentiments of eſteem in the minds of thoſe who have had the pleaſure of his acquaintance; for age renders more intereſting a man who to the ſocial graces adds ſuch uncommon talents for communicating pleaſure and inſtruction. The counteſs, who to the talents of her own ſex joins the good ſenſe of a philoſopher, is every way worthy of ſuch a huſband. The young count, who poſſeſſes a knowledge of the principal languages of Europe, with a profound ſkill in politics, is modeſt and intereſting. He has written in French an account of a journey he made to the Crimea, when the empreſs of Ruſſia was there; and though he did not publiſh it at that time, it is not yet too late, if his modeſty will permit him.

There are only four ambaſſadors here. That of France ranks firſt; the Engliſh ambaſſador is next; after him comes the *bailo* of Venice; and laſtly, the ambaſſador of Holland. The reſt, ſuch as thoſe of Spain, Sweden, Pruſſia, and Naples, have the title only of envoys. There is likewiſe an agent here from Poland, and a conſul from Raguſa. The ambaſſadors only are permitted to have audiences of the grand ſignor;

and this they are allowed but once, which is on their arrival. The reſt only ſee the vizier, or the *kaimachan* his lieutenant, and governor of Conſtantinople.

The new envoy of Pruſſia being about to obtain his audience of the kaimachan, gave us leave to accompany him. The following is an account of the ceremony. The janiſſaries of the envoy in habits of ceremony, two by two, preceded the *ciocadar*, or honorary attendants, who came in the like order, followed by the domeſtics in laced liveries. The envoy was dreſſed in gold brocade, and ſeated in a chair borne by ſix *ciocadars;* the interpreters, chancellors, people of his country, and other foreigners, and laſtly, his pages following behind. In this order we went down to *Top-hana*, a ſuburb of Pera and Galata on the channel ſo called on account of the cannon-foundry, a building adorned with ſeveral domes, and ſituated at the diſtance of one hundred paces from the ſea. In this part of the ſuburbs there are ſuperb moſques, and beautiful fountains; and on the ſhore is a large quantity of braſs cannon piled in order. I remarked one which was twenty-one feet long, and one foot diameter in the bore; and another which could diſcharge eleven bullets at once from eleven different mouths. The *Top-gi baſci*, governor of Pera, is the commandant of *Top-hana*.

But to proceed with my narrative, I ſhall inform you, that the envoy, accompanied by his interpreters and chancellors, embarked in a handſome gilded boat, attended by a number of barks. On his landing at Conſtantinople, the janiſſaries and domeſtics

domeſtics ranged themſelves in the ſame order as before; and we found horſes ready harneſſed on the ſhore. The expence on theſe occaſions is defrayed by the porte, which fixes the day of audience; and that appointment muſt be kept, let the weather be what it may. As we went along the Turks ridiculed us, and ſome of them heartily curſed us. When we arrived in the court of the kaimachan's palace, thoſe whoſe office it was to take charge of the horſes preſented themſelves to help us to diſmount, which was done without the leaſt confuſion; and they then begged paras. We aſcended a magnificent ſtair-caſe, covered with carpeting, into a ſpacious hall, the ceiling of which was carved and gilt, and where nothing was to be ſeen but beautiful carpets and ſophas covered with gold brocade. The interpreter then made his appearance, to inform the envoy that he could not ſee the kaimachan immediately, becauſe he was at prayers; the ordinary pretext of Turkiſh vanity, which is gratified in making viſitors wait. After dancing attendance in the antichamber for about ten minutes we were uſhered into a ſaloon, larger and more elegantly furniſhed than the firſt. It was full of Turks, who on the appearance of the kaimachan made way for him to paſs between them, pronouncing aloud, and at ſeveral times, ſome words which we did not underſtand. This noiſe was ſucceeded by a profound ſilence. The kaimachan ſat down on a ſtool in a corner of the room, with his back turned towards us. The envoy and his interpreter placed themſelves oppoſite to him in the ſame corner, and we all remained

ſtanding. The latter read the credentials which the miniſter preſented, and explained them to the kaimachan; and after mutual compliments coffee was introduced, which was ſerved up by ſeveral ſervants, in order that no preference or diſtinction might be ſhewn. When all was over, the envoy returned to his hotel with the ſame retinue.

LETTER XXIX.

Conſtantinople, Nov. 30, 1788.

AT Smyrna ſhips are allowed to ring their hour bells as much as they pleaſe. Here the caſe is otherwiſe, for all is ſilence in the preſence of deſpotiſm. Ours was rung for the firſt days, but it rang no longer. This act is contrary to the Mahomedan religion; and people are very religious in this country, you know, as is indicated by the name of the city * *Iſtambul*, or the ſeat of the true faith. It is ſaid, however, that the noiſe interrupted the grand ſignor's repoſe, and that of his wives, whoſe number, we are told, amounts to more than five hundred; and one of them being ſick, even fifes and flageolets are obliged to be mute alſo.

The Turkiſh fleet, conſiſting of forty-ſix ſail, is juſt arrived from the Black Sea. This is only one third of the number which ſailed thither. It is reported that the captain pacha will be diſgraced, which would be according to order, at leaſt according to that obſerved by the Turks. They wiſh

* The name the Turks give to Conſtantinople.

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it, however, to be believed that the remainder of the fleet continues in the Black Sea.—All trick and impoſture throughout.

I have been round the port in a boat, in order to get a near view of the Turkiſh ſhips. The port, the entrance of which is only ſeven hundred feet wide, is immenſe, and of ſuch depth, that large ſhips are perfectly ſafe even along-ſide the quay. It never requires to be cleaned; for the currents which come from the Black Sea, daſhing againſt Cape Boſphorus, are repelled by thoſe which enter at the point of the ſeraglio; and then running back to the right, throw the mud towards the freſh water, which, in returning, unites with theſe currents, and carries with it the ſlime collected on the coaſt. The freſh water river, the ancient Barbyſes, is at the end of the port; and the ſpot where the mud commences, is marked by ſtakes driven into the water.

This port cannot be beheld without delight; the two ſhores from time to time preſenting charming diſtant views and beautiful buildings, which ſeem to float upon the ſea. Before you reach the *terſana* or arſenal, ſtands the marine hoſpital, a vaſt edifice, ſtrongly built, and painted in a ſingular manner. The captain pacha's villa, which is only at a little diſtance, is pretty neat. At the end of the arſenal is a ſuperb palace belonging to the grand ſignor, moſt elegantly gilt. The windows of it are coloured; and upon the gratings are landſcapes tolerably well painted. The melancholy ſilence which reigns around this place; the difficulty of procuring acceſs

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to it; and the voluptuous air that one breathes around it, all tended to make us concert projects which we ſhall never be ſo happy as to realiſe. We likewiſe ſaw the grand ſignor's ſmall galleys and large boats, which were lying under cover near the arſenal: they are enriched with magnificent canopies, ornamented with a profuſion of gold, diſpoſed with much taſte.

The port is continually covered with boats filled with people of every country and religion. The Turks make a point of going thither every day; and the Greeks, Armenians, Jews, and Francs, very often, eſpecially on their feſtivals. The Turkiſh women never fail to go thither, even in bad weather. They are attended by their ſlaves: if they have none, they go alone, as their huſbands never deign to accompany them. It is ſaid, that many abuſe this liberty for purpoſes of gallantry; and as their mode of dreſſing makes it difficult to know them again, it has often happened that the boatman has carried his own wife to the arms of her gallant.

There are at preſent no more than ſixteen ſhips of the line in the port. Two of them are well built, having been conſtructed under the direction of M. Le R———, lately recalled by France. The reſt are built in the Turkiſh manner, heavy and unwieldy. The ſtern of a frigate of twenty-eight guns is as large as that of one of our fifties. I leave you, therefore, to gueſs the height of their ſhips of the line. The galleries are ornamented with carved work, and arabeſque, partly painted

painted and partly gilt. The beak-heads are decorated with a gilt lion, having on his head a crown. Thoſe who underſtand naval architecture ſay, that their fire-ſhips are pretty well conſtructed. The arſenal built by Mahomet II. contains a prodigious quantity of wood; and in the docks are veſſels of different rates.

To the ſcandal of predeſtination, the ſeamen and janiſſaries every day come to blows with their cutlaſſes. The latter at leaſt ſay, that they have performed great exploits, ſuch as burning villages, carrying away plunder and ſlaves, and cutting off the heads of thoſe whom they were unable to ſubdue (as a proof of this, they wear a little feather of ſilver tinſel on their turban, if they have killed but one; two, if they have killed two, &c.); whilſt the mariners on the other hand have nothing to oppoſe to this, but a liſt of the ſhips which the Ruſſians have taken or burned.

I know not what to ſay to the Turkiſh war. Predeſtination and numbers may prolong it ſome time; but theſe advantages are not infinite, and the Turks poſſeſs no other. They have no diſcipline either by ſea or land, or at leaſt none worthy of that name; and they expoſe themſelves to bullets with the ſame ardour that the enemy ſeek to avoid them. Their manœuvres are very complicated. The guns on board their ſhips are diſpoſed with ſo little order, that a twenty-four pounder is placed next to a twelve; and they are not famous for working them in a ſkilful manner. To this we may add, that their ſuperſtition itſelf makes againſt them,

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as one of their prophecies imports, that Conſtantinople ſhall one day fall again into the hands of its original maſters, the Infidels. Were they to receive a great check, this prophecy might be fulfilled. The Greeks too favour the Ruſſians in ſecret, becauſe they are of the ſame religion; and hope by their means to free themſelves from the yoke of their deſpots. Beſides all this, the Turks are exhauſted, taxes increaſe, acts of extortion and oppreſſion are multiplied, the plague comes every year periodically, and almoſt always follows a war, and the troops are not paid, &c. circumſtances which would decidedly make in favour of Ruſſia, if the other powers of Europe did not ſet bounds to her ambition. But an enterpriſe really generous, intereſting to humanity, and which would inſure glory to all the potentates who concurred in it, would be to co-operate with the empreſs in driving the Turks from Europe, to reſtore the Greeks to liberty, and to leave them the right of governing themſelves. We ſhould then ſee theſe people rouſe from the lethargy into which they have been plunged for ſo many centuries, and ſhew themſelves worthy of their anceſtors. Modern corruption however is ſo great, that though we may wiſh ſuch a project to be realiſed, it is greatly to be feared that it will never take place; becauſe other nations, from a puerile apprehenſion of ſuffering in their commerce, would never permit a people to become independent who would ſoon ſurpaſs them, in the ſame manner as their anceſtors ſurpaſſed all their cotemporary nations.

War has rendered the Turks more religious; for ſuperſtition always derives force from public calamity. Government have ordered the taverns which they formerly tolerated to be ſhut. Theſe public places were kept by Greeks, who, to increaſe their cuſtom, often procured boys to dance in them. They were indeed forbidden to ſell wine to a true believer; but every body knows that a tavern is not a place where one ought to look for water. Beſides, the Turks can drink brandy; for, as they ſay, Mahomet prohibited only wine: and by this evaſion they can quiet their conſciences. Some of them however do drink wine. It muſt be allowed to every religion, to have ſome ſinners and infidels among its pretended votaries.

A Turk, who was in England with the laſt ambaſſador from Tripoli, and who ſpeaks Engliſh fluently, came to dine on board our veſſel. The following is a part of our converſation.—Why do you drink wine? Becauſe I cannot help it; beſides, it is but reaſonable that I ſhould get drunk with wine, ſince others do it with opium, which I do not like.—If you do not eat pork in public, you will in private. Would not God, who is every where, ſee me?—Are you ſorry that your children are dead? I knew not what to do with them; God had given them to me, he has taken them away.—Why have you but one wife, ſince you are permitted to have four? Becauſe one is ſufficient, and, beſides, I am not rich enough to maintain ſeveral; for the cuſtom here, is not the ſame as with you, where the wife pays the huſband to take her.—

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Are you allowed to part with your wives? Yes, if there are ſufficient cauſes on both ſides.—Is it true that, before you take your firſt wife, you muſt entruſt her one night to the care of another man? The law orders it ſo, that we may more narrowly examine into the motives which induce us to repudiate our wives; but this inconvenience may ſometimes be avoided by means of money.—What think you of thoſe who make love to their friends wives? Oh, that is not proper.—Where ſhall you go after death? God only knows; for we are unlike you Chriſtians, who know every thing.—He drank pure wine, and taſted of every diſh, that, as he ſaid, he might not commit ſin in doing otherwiſe.

LETTER XXX.

Conſtantinople, Nov. 1788.

YESTERDAY we went to ſee the moſque of St. Sophia. At the end of the firſt ſtreet, to the right, as you enter Conſtantinople by the Fiſh-gate, ſtands a very ſingular building. It is a ſmall edifice with a dome; and the garden, which is cloſe to it, is ſurrounded by a colonnade: we took it to be the country-ſeat of ſome nobleman, but we found that it was the burying-place of the grand ſignior's children. Through the windows and gratings we perceived a fine hall, containing nine or ten coffins covered with ſtuff elegantly embroidered in gold and ſilver. Theſe coffins were placed between golden chandeliers. Thoſe of the boys were diſtinguiſhed by the golden turbans, with which they were ornamented. At the ſight of this ſaloon, a ſailor ſaid, with a good deal of humour, that, if he were aſſured of being ſo well accommodated after his death, he would have no objection to take his departure from this life immediately.

Such is the corruption of the Turks at preſent, as a derviſe told me, who ſpoke ſeveral languages, that they do every thing

thing for money. This complaint is well founded. Every infidel, provided he pays a ſequin or five piaſtres, is allowed to ſee the temples of the true believers, all the ſeven moſques. The Imam of St. Sophia did not refuſe us acceſs to the moſque, but he ſtipulated that he ſhould be paid beforehand; which is at once a proof of the politeneſs of the Turks, and of their being free from miſtruſt. We entered by a veſtibule which led to the gallery of the temple. It is cuſtomary with us, on paying a viſit, or on offering up our prayers to the Almighty, to uncover the head, which ſometimes occaſions colds; the Turks, to teſtify the ſame reſpect, pull off their ſhoes or ſlippers at their entrance, and carry them in their hand as we do our hats. We neither pulled off our hats nor ſlippers; and the Imam, whom our piaſtres had rendered tractable, took no offence at our conduct.

There is nothing in the dome of St. Sophia that will ſurpriſe any one who has ſeen that of St. Peter. The Grecian architect, however, who conſtructed this dome at a time when the arts were loſt to his country, ought not to be denied his ſhare of praiſe. You would imagine that it was juſt about to fall—at firſt view it inſpires the beholder with terror, which, ſome ſay, is the effect intended by the architect.

The gallery, which is wide, and like the whole moſque paved with Cyzicum marble, is embelliſhed with colonnades. On the pavement were croſſes in bas-relief, which the Turks, on account of their diſlike to them, have partly defaced, leaving only the upright part. The columns are of ancient green marble,

marble, porphyry, African marble, and granite. But, what wretched chapiters! ſome of which the earthquakes have occaſioned to incline downwards, and have been ſecured with plates of iron.

This church was built by Juſtinian, upon the deſtruction of thoſe erected by Conſtantine and his ſucceſſors by earthquakes or fire; and it is ſaid he was ſo pleaſed with it, that he exclaimed, *I have ſurpaſſed Solomon!* This church has ſuſtained conſiderable injury from fire and earthquakes; and though it has been always repaired, it is nevertheleſs in a ruinous condition in ſeveral parts. It fronts the eaſt, and is built in the form of a Greek croſs: according to the account of thoſe who have meaſured it, it is two hundred and fifty-two feet long, and two hundred and twenty-eight wide. Where the principal altar formerly ſtood, there is now a ſort of niche, containing a large Alcoran, covered with a green veil, and placed between two flambeaux, which are lighted only during feſtivals. On one ſide of the altar is a balcony with gilded lattices, reſerved for the grand ſignior when he attends prayers, which, to prevent murmuring and inſurrections among the people, he is obliged to do every Friday, ſometimes in one moſque, and ſometimes in another, without any exemption from bad weather, or even from ill health. Friday is held ſacred by the Turks, in like manner as Saturday is by the Jews, and Sunday by the Chriſtians; many of them, however, work on it. You know it was on this day that Mahomet took his flight from Mecca

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to Medina, in July of the year of Chriſt 622, from whence the Mahometan æra commences, called therefore *Hegira*, that is to ſay, flight. On the anniverſary of this day every Muſſulman is obliged to go once to prayers, in ſome moſque or other.

On the left of the altar I have been deſcribing, is a chair of a moſt ſingular form, in which the mufti, or chief of the Mahometan religion, offers up his prayers during the Ramazan and the Bayram.

There is no longer any moſaic work in the dome; what remained of it having been deſtroyed by the avarice or ſuperſtition of the Turks. In a corner of the gallery there is however a room, the roof of which is adorned with ſome indifferent figures in moſaic work. The articles of belief, and the name of God, of Mahomet, and of the four legiſlators, Hali, Oſman, Omar, and Abube-Kier, are inſcribed in large golden characters in various parts of the moſque. As it was prayer time, we ſaw ſeveral Turks ſitting together in groups, who were reading the Koran to boys, or inſtructing them to read it; but we ſaw no women. It was in this church, as I have ſomewhere read, that the French danced during the Cruſades, with women who followed the army; one of whom, ſeating herſelf in the patriarchal chair, ſung pſalms, which were not of a very edifying nature.

When we came out, we went to ſee the ſeraglio, which is very near the moſque of St. Sophia. This vaſt building, which has a very high narrow gate, and ſome wretched windows

dows with gratings before them, ſo little reſembles the palace of a powerful ſovereign, that we took it for a priſon. It is from this gate that the Ottoman court derives its name of the Porte. Near the ſeraglio we ſaw a beautiful fountain, adorned with arabeſque paintings, and gilt in a very ſingular ſtyle; and with a cupola terminating in a ball and creſcent, alſo gilt. The Turkiſh profeſſion of faith is engraved on one of the ſtones of this fountain, which is turned towards Mecca. The ſame inſcription is to be found on every fountain, in order that the Muſſulmen may repeat their prayers, and perform their ablutions at the ſame time. As there is a ſcarcity of water in this country, the rich often bequeath legacies for the purpoſe of erecting public fountains. Many Turks gain a livelihood by carrying about water for ſale in leathern bags. I even ſaw a derviſe exerciſe this calling; but I obſerved that he gave water to the poor for nothing.

We afterwards went to take a walk in the town. The *burnt pillar* is worthy of notice. It is of porphyry, and conſiſts of various pieces curiouſly joined together by bandages of copper, in the form of laurel wreaths; which being for the moſt part worn, diſcovers the artifice. As it has been often expoſed to fires, it has been bound round with ſeveral circles of iron in order to keep it together. It was erected in honour of Conſtantine, whoſe ſtatue in braſs was placed on the top. The ſtatue having been thrown down, and the ſhaft of the pillar injured by lightning, the emperor Emmanuel Comnenus curtailed its height, and embelliſhed it with a chapiter

of

of the Doric order, and an inſcription which is not now legible.

The race courſe, called by the Turks *Atmeidan*, is likewiſe deſerving of the traveller's attention. It was a circus, begun, as is ſaid, by the emperor Severus, and finiſhed under Conſtantine. It is upwards of four hundred paces in length, and one hundred in breadth, according to Tournefort, who meaſured it; but it is certain that it was formerly of much greater extent, for the ſuperb moſque of ſultan Achmet III. occupies a large part of it. This moſque was built after the model of St. Sophia; as were likewiſe the other five royal moſques, thoſe of Solyma, Valida, of ſultans Bajazet, Selim, and Mahomet; except that St. Sophia has but one gallery, and four clumſy minarets (one of which is more ſo than the reſt, having been the ancient belfry); whereas the moſque of Achmet, beſides three galleries, has ſix minarets, all built in a ſtyle of boldneſs, neatneſs, and elegance. Theſe moſques are all ſuperb edifices, being built of the fineſt ſtone, and the beſt marble, with which the temples of Cryſopolis, Chalcedon, and Byzantium, were embelliſhed. They are inſulated, and have ſpacious courts, containing trees, and fountains for performing ablution. Their revenues are conſiderable, and very great privileges are annexed to them.

In this circus is an Egyptian obeliſk, of a coarſe-grained red granite, fifty feet high, and all of one piece. The hiero-

glyphics are in good preſervation; and the Greek and Latin inſcriptions engraved on the pedeſtal, which is of marble, expreſs that it was erected by Theodoſius. The machines employed for this purpoſe are there deſcribed in bas-relief, as well as the hippodrome, and the races formerly celebrated in this place. A little further on is a pillar of bronze, ſunk into the ground, conſiſting only of three ſerpents, without heads, twiſted together, and which riſe in a ſpiral direction. It is more than ſixteen feet high. May not this be the famous brazen pillar which ſupported the golden tripod at Delphos, and which, according to Herodotus, was in the form of a ſerpent with three heads? There are powerful reaſons to ſupport this conjecture; and, for my own part, I feel a pleaſure in admitting their validity. The populace ſay, that the grand ſignior confines the plague within this column; and to prevent it from eſcaping, they have filled up the opening with ſtones. At the bottom of the circus is another obeliſk, which was formerly caſed with bas-reliefs in bronze; nothing now remains of it however but the carcaſe, conſiſting of ſquare ſtones. The Turks uſe this circus for exerciſing their horſes.

At ſome ſmall diſtance from the hippodrome is a ſubterraneous place called by the Turks *Bin-Din Dirck*, where above one thouſand columns are ſeen ſupporting a vaſt vault. It is ſaid to have been a ciſtern made by the Greek emperors, that they might not want water in time of war.

In

In one corner of a ſtreet is a monument of porphyry, called Conſtantine's tomb.

The beſeſteins are much richer than thoſe of Smyrna. Whatever relates to harneſs, horſes, and precious ſtones in them, muſt attract in a particular manner the attention of the leaſt curious.

LETTER XXXI.

Conſtantinople, Dec. 1788.

THE true believers have lately celebrated the birth-day of their prophet; and there have been every night ſuperb illuminations in all the minarets. As the grand ſignior intended to go in ſtate to one of the moſques, we went and ſecured places early, that we might ſee him paſs. You cannot imagine what numbers of people were in the ſtreets, and at the windows. Among the ſpectators were ſeveral poor perſons, who ſeemed to entertain no bad opinion of us, for they came in crowds to ſolicit our charity. A great concourſe now gathered round us, ſome of whom viewed us from head to foot, examined our dreſs, and then burſt into a fit of laughter. Others extended their curioſity ſo far as to touch us, and to lay hold of our ſticks, and we were then obliged to have recourſe to the janiſſary to ſend them away. It was a long time before the grand ſignior made his appearance, but the people waited for him with great patience. At laſt the janiſſaries appeared, followed by the ciocadars, the public officers, the principal men of the court, the mufti, the kaimakan,

kaimakan, the *kiſlar aga*, or chief of the black eunuchs, and two dwarfs; theſe were all on horſeback, and advanced two by two to the number of four hundred. In the middle of this cavalcade appeared the grand ſignior magnificently dreſſed; his turban was enriched with a ſuperb aigrette of diamonds. He is near ſixty years of age, and has a majeſtic figure, which inſpires reſpect, without exciting fear. As he paſſed, all the ſpectators bowed very low, and obſerved a profound ſilence. He was followed by two of his children; one of them, who had a ſilk umbrella, turned towards us ſeveral times, and gazed at us with an air of wonder and ſurpriſe. Next came a man, who threw away money; and the chief of the black eunuchs, who ſaluted every body, in the manner uſually practiſed by the Turks, by laying his hand on his heart, and bending his head every now and then. The grand ſignior's ſword, and two of his turbans, ornamented with precious ſtones, were borne by men. The taſte, variety, and richneſs of the dreſſes, the turbans, arms and the furs, the beauty of the Arabian horſes, whoſe houſings were edged with gold and ſilver, and covered with jewels, altogether formed a ſpectacle no where to be met with, but at Conſtantinople.

After the proceſſion I ſaw ſome carriages of a very ſingular conſtruction. They were gilt, and made of baſket-work; and are uſed by the Turkiſh ladies of quality, when they go abroad for amuſement. In theſe carriages there is a mattreſs, on which four women can ſit conveniently enough: they

they are uſually drawn by buffaloes; for horſes here are deſtined to a better uſe, and this I think is right.

Among the vaſt concourſe of people who were collected by this proceſſion, there were numbers whoſe dreſs denoted them to be foreigners. This circumſtance induced us to enquire into the population of the city. We were informed that, by ſome calculators, it was made to amount to nine hundred thouſand, and by others to a million. With reſpect to the people whom we remarked to be dreſſed in a different manner from the inhabitants of the country, we were given to underſtand that they were Perſians, Georgians, Tartars, Scythians, Indians, Arabians, Bulgarians, Boſnians, Albaneſe, &c. who were come to ſettle in the capital of the Ottoman empire.

It is ſo rare to meet with dwarfs, lame, rickety, or deformed perſons in Conſtantinople, that we did not ſee a ſingle one among all this innumerable multitude.

Notwithſtanding the ravages occaſioned by the plague, this place, as you find, is always well peopled. Amongſt other cauſes of population may be reckoned, poverty, avarice, and ambition. So great is the extortion practiſed in the provinces of this empire, and ſuch is the wretched ſituation of their inhabitants, that the greater part are compelled to emigrate. Beſides, the ſlave trade is very lucrative here; and as there are no nobility, every man, by means of money, favour, or merit, may become of conſequence. The preſent grand vizier was a ſlave. The aga of Athens was a domeſtic in the

the ſervice of the captain pacha. He is returned to his former maſter. We have ſeen him again; and he received us in the ſame manner as he did at Athens. He retains the ſame moderation in a humble, that he exhibited in an exalted ſtation. One of the Engliſh ambaſſador's interpreters received ſome days ago a viſit from the aga of Galata. The latter aſked if he knew him? and the other anſwering in the negative, What, ſays he, have you ſo ſoon forgot the boatman who brought you water four years ago?

The populace, who are every where equally inſolent, not being able to inſult us on account of the janiſſary by whom we were attended, ſeveral times honoured us with the epithets of *Ghiaours*, *Naſi*, *Naſceh*, *Indim*, &c. Though it be true that they hold the Franks in ſome little eſtimation, they are always ready to renounce this reſpect, which is almoſt forced on their part. A European lady returning home one night with ſome company, paſſed through a place where there were a good many Turks. One of them ſaid diſtinctly enough to be heard by her interpreter: With what delight could I fire a piſtol at theſe *ghiaours!* With ſome certain people it is eaſier for them to do this than to ſay it; and with others it is eaſier to ſay it than to do it. I have been told, that a Turk one day meeting a poor Greek, ſtopped him, and then ſaid, I have this day promiſed to God and to Mahomet the head of a ghiaour, and immediately diſcharged his piſtol, and killed him on the ſpot. The cuſtom of making

ſuch

ſuch vows is very ancient, but not the leſs barbarous. This ruffian abſented himſelf for ſome days, and then obtained a pardon from the relations of the deceaſed by means of a ſum of money, which, owing to their poverty, fear, miſery, and the impoſſibility of getting juſtice, is never refuſed; and he appeared afterwards with more arrogance than before.

"Tantum religio potuit ſuadere malorum."

During the time we were in the Dardanelles, one of my friends, while walking on the ſhore, was met by ſeven or eight Turks, one of whom, paſſing cloſe to him, knocked him down with his fiſt, and this only for the pleaſure of doing miſchief to a Chriſtian. Such is the general character of the Turks, and particularly of the ignorant part of them (which compriſes almoſt the whole), and conſequently of the populace, who always carry their religious zeal to exceſs. To this groſs ignorance muſt be aſcribed the intolerance and brutal pride which characteriſe this people. Nothing but powerful intereſt, extreme ſenſibility, or a relaxation in religious principles, can influence a Turk to an act of beneficence or humanity.

The Greeks, who reſide in the iſlands or diſtant provinces, not being able to lay their complaints before the throne, are very ill treated by the Turks, who, becauſe they are their tributaries, conſider them as their ſlaves.

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When the captain pacha makes his tour round the Archipelago to collect the taxes, he behaves with great humanity towards the Greeks, and the Turks therefore tax him with apoſtacy. He loves the Greeks, and favours them; that is to ſay, he will not ſuffer them to be ill treated with impunity. On this account, the Turks ſay he muſt be of their religion. Such is the ſophiſm ſuperſtition employs to attack the humanity of this perſonage, who perhaps may not dare to ſhew himſelf ſo humane as he could wiſh.

It muſt not be imagined that the Turks have more partiality for one nation than for another. How is it poſſible for them to love a Chriſtian? A Turk however one day ſaid to an Engliſhman, *L'Angliſi ſtar bono Chriſtiano*, The Engliſh are the beſt of Chriſtians; but it is to be remarked, that he ſaid this to an Engliſhman. I have obſerved, that they anſwer the Franks in the ſame manner, though they conſider them all as one people, that is, a nation of dogs. Theſe flatteries are compliments of that falſe coin which is every where more current than the real; and which the Turks, by converſing with the Europeans, have from them learned to uſe. I cannot forget the anſwer of a Turk mentioned by Rycaut. The French ambaſſador one day announced to the grand vizier, that his maſter had taken Arras from the Spaniards, and gained other victories in Flanders, imagining that the Turk would have teſtified his ſatisfaction on the occaſion. The latter however only replied, "What is it to

"me whether the pig worries the dog, or the dog the "pig, provided my maſter's head is on his ſhoulders?" The janiſſaries even who attend the ambaſſadors have ſo little reſpect for their maſters, that they never riſe when they paſs by.

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LETTER XXXII.

Conſtantinople, 1788.

WE have ſailed round the ſeraglio in a boat. This vaſt edifice is ſituated on a point of the Thracian peninſula, where the Boſphorus commences, and at the entrance into the port. The walls are compoſed of bricks and free-ſtone; and a great part of them conſiſt of a mixture of maſon-work, pillars and chapiters. They are furniſhed with battlements and towers at certain intervals. On the walls are ſome Greek inſcriptions, which it is dangerous to copy in the preſence of the Turks, who, taking this for a proof of one's being a ſorcerer, or an evil-minded perſon, are likely enough to knock one down for ſo doing. Beſides, this is not very eaſy to thoſe who are unacquainted with the Greek.

The ſeraglio is defended by one hundred pieces of cannon placed level with the water, and covered by ſheds. They are uſed only during the Bayram, or on the occaſion of the ſultana's lying-in. There are ſome of all dimenſions; I ſaw two, larger than thoſe at the Dardanelles, which, the Turks ſay, were caſt by order of Mahomet II. in his camp before Babylon.

You will ſcarcely believe that we could have dared to land near the garden of cypreſs trees. The *boſtangis*, who are at the ſame time the gardeners and the guards of the ſeraglio, made us depart after we had ſeen every thing. They pointed to ſome windows at a great height, and made ſigns to us, that if we were ſeen by any one, they, as well as we, would run the riſk of being made ſhorter by the head.

The kioſh of the *boſtangi-baſci*, that is of the ſuperintendant of the gardens, is near the point of the ſeraglio, and is ſupported by twelve pillars of ancient green marble. That of the grand ſignior, from which he embarks and receives the compliments of the captain pacha on his departure and return, appears next on the bank of the ſea.

The city of Conſtantinople, in its form, pretty much reſembles a triangle. Two of its ſides are waſhed by the ſea; that of the port, which is ſomewhat inclined, and the other extending from the point of the ſeraglio to the Seven Towers. Theſe towers, the point of the ſeraglio, and the moſque of Ejouf towards the river, occupy three angles formed by this metropolis. The circumference of Conſtantinople is ſaid to be thirty-three miles, including the ſuburbs beyond the port, ſuch as Galata, Pera, Tophana, &c. This ſuperb city, ſituated on a tongue of land between two ſeas, was really formed to be the capital of the univerſe; and if that emperor, called (but for what reaſon I know not) the Great, diſmembered the Roman empire, by transferring the ſeat of it to Byzantium,

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it muſt be acknowledged that he choſe a ſpot moſt delightful in itſelf, and extremely favourable to commerce.

The *boſtangi-baſci* has the ſuperintendance of the port, and of the whole channel. His boat has twenty-four oars; and the rowers are all boſtangis. I make this remark, becauſe the number of oars to a boat is not diſcretional here, even the ambaſſadors themſelves being allowed no more than fourteen.

It is at all times pleaſant to go round the port in a boat. Beſides the magnificent views, which retain their effect even when the eye becomes familiariſed to them, every object which appears ſeems to preſent ſomething ſtriking. You ſee many of the boats, which I have deſcribed in another letter, in the rapidity of their progreſs, ſometimes run againſt one another, and daſh each other to pieces. The cries of the watermen give, indeed, notice of approaching danger; but, owing to the conceitedneſs, want of ſkill, and miſchievous diſpoſition of theſe people, fatal accidents often happen. Theſe boats are light, have flat keels, and are eaſily overſet. There is nothing in them but a carpet, on which the paſſenger ſits croſs-legged. Thoſe of the grandees are furniſhed with a cuſhion, by the ſide of which is a pipe. The tranſport boats, the antique form of which reminds one of the firſt ages of navigation; the ſhips of almoſt all nations ſeen in the port; the inceſſant croaking of the gulls, which are continually hovering round; the pigeons that perch on the barges laden with corn, which they devour at their eaſe, without

without the maſter's daring to make the leaſt motion to prevent the theft; the ſhouts of the Turkiſh ſailors when they perform the leaſt manœuvre, and which degenerates into a ſort of mournful cadence; the ſerious air of the boatmen; the impertinence and knavery of the Jewiſh and Greek watermen; the curioſity of the Turkiſh women, who do nothing but eye the Franks, and lament that they are not Muſſulmen;—all unite to form a number of varied and amuſing ſcenes.

The canal abounds with ſturgeon, excellent mullets, eels, and pilc ards (of which laſt there ſeems to have been always a great quantity, for we ſee the figure of this fiſh on the ancient medals of Byzantium); the market-place of Galata is therefore always provided with the fineſt fiſh in the world, which is ſold very cheap. As the Turks are bad fiſhermen, they are ſupplied with fiſh by the Greeks. Theſe people poſſeſſed the dominion of the neighbouring ſeas, and they ſeem in ſome meaſure to retain it at the preſent day, for all the fiſheries and maritime commerce are in their hands.

The pigeons I mentioned to you are very numerous, and the Turks extend their charity ſo far as to bequeath legacies to ſupport them: they do the ſame in reſpect to cats and dogs, the number of which is almoſt infinite. Theſe dogs, however, do not on this account become much fatter; for you may count the bones of ſome of them through their ſkin. They aſſemble in groups in the ſtreets, which to them are ſo many ſeparate diſtricts; and they ſeem to make it a law never

never to desert that which belongs to them. Should any unhappy novice chance to transgress this law, those upon whose district he infringes fall upon him in order to make him behave better. As the Turks retire to rest at sun-set, a profound silence would prevail during the whole night, were it not for the noise of these animals, which bark at every Frank they meet. They extend their animosity much further at Tophana, for they there rush in a body upon those who are going aboard. The only remedy is to be armed with a good stick, a single blow of which is sufficient to disperse them all in a moment.

LETTER XXXIII.

Conſtantinople, 1788.

A STRANGER, who has beheld the intolerance of London and Paris, muſt be much ſurpriſed to ſee a church here between a moſque and a ſynagogue, and a derviſe by the ſide of a capuchin friar. I know not how this government can have admitted into its boſom religions ſo oppoſite to its own. It muſt be from the degeneracy of Mahommedaniſm, that this happy contraſt has been produced. What is ſtill more aſtoniſhing is to find that this ſpirit of toleration is generally prevalent among the people; for here you ſee Turks, Jews, Catholics, Armenians, Greeks, and Proteſtants converſing together, on ſubjects of buſineſs or pleaſure, with as much harmony and good will as if they were of the ſame country and religion.

If we trace this toleration to its ſource, it ſeems to proceed from commerce and the government; for the Mahommedan religion, it is well known, inſpires ſentiments of hatred and animoſity towards thoſe who follow any other. It contains, however, ſome excellent precepts. It inculcates the unity of God;

God; enjoins the love of one's neighbour, almſgiving, works of charity, reconciliation with enemies; and even ordains prayers for the converſion of Idolaters, Jews, Chriſtians, Infidels, &c. The eternity of future rewards and puniſhments is a fundamental principle of this religion: but commentators, according to cuſtom, do not fail to expatiate on a paſſage of the Koran, from which they infer that the pains of hell may not be eternal. There are ſome ſects of the Mahommedans who do not believe in them. The Ghiahamites, for inſtance, ſay, that this eternity is metaphorical, as, when ſpeaking of a prince's reign, it is wiſhed to be for ever; and the Ghiahedites believe that the damned will in ſucceſſion of time be changed into fire, like all other matter conſumed by that element. Among the followers of Ali is a ſect who take their name from a doctor called Alkhathab, and who hold the joys of heaven and the pains of hell to be nothing but the pleaſures and afflictions of life. On this account theſe people are juſtly deemed profane. It is aſtoniſhing that infidelity ſhould always find proſelytes, where there are men who pique themſelves on genius and good ſenſe. It was this, I ſuppoſe, which prompted a Mahommedan poet, not a very orthodox one you may ſuppoſe, to expreſs himſelf in the following manner—"The Chriſtians make continual de-
"viations in their path; and the Mahommedans are quite
"out of the road. The Jews are mummers; and the Per-
"ſian magi are only dreamers. The world then is divided
"into two deſcriptions of men; the firſt of whom have

" ſenſe, and no religion; the other have religion, and little " ſenſe."

It is not to be ſuppoſed that the happineſs promiſed by Mahomet is confined merely to ſenſual delights; for the prophet ſays, that the believers will find in paradiſe gardens on the banks of rivers, where they will enjoy eternal life with women whoſe youth and beauty ſhall be continually renewed: he adds, that, beſides theſe delights, they will enjoy the preſence of the Deity, which will make them happy. His hell likewiſe is ſtored with materials of a ſingular nature: theſe are the heads of devils, which muſt be very terrible, eſpecially as we know how the devil is formed. An angel from God preſides in hell, apparently to maintain in it good order; and, according to the Koran, this hell has ſeven gates. The greateſt puniſhment of the damned, however, conſiſts in their ſeparation from the Deity; and this agrees with the Scriptures. Some interpreters underſtand the ſeven different gates—to be ſo many different ſtages in which ſinners of various claſſes will be puniſhed. The Muſſulmen are not compriſed in the number, if we may credit one of their doctors, who ſays, that they are to make only a temporary, and not an eternal abode there, like the reſt: he therefore places theſe in order, and with ſurpriſing liberality, the Materialiſts, the Manicheans, the Brachmans, who reject the Holy Scriptures, and who believe neither in the Old nor the New Teſtament; and the Chriſtians, becauſe they admit them both; the Guebres and Hypocrites. Some day or other, perhaps, ſome one

one will find out an eighth door, contrived for the admiſſion of thoſe who believe all that we have mentioned.—Another interpreter ſays, that the ſeven doors are the ſeven capital ſins which lead to hell, by a ſeparation from God, and a privation of his preſence. Many other fine things are ſaid of this ſyſtem, which you may ſee in the Oriental Library of Herbelot, under the article *Gehennem*.

Predeſtination is one of the tremendous dogmas of Mahommedaniſm; it is not, however, without its advantages in ſome reſpects. It is to this article of belief that the Porte is indebted for the facility with which it raiſes ſuch numerous armies. On the other hand, it allays the uſeleſs affliction of a father at the death of his children, or of one who has been ruined by ſome cruel ſtroke of fortune, or who has been deprived of his honour by injuſtice or calumny, &c. I have ſeen ſeveral Turks ſuſtain theſe dreadful calamities, uttering, for their only comfort or complaint, "May the will "of the Almighty be done!" I cannot, however, aſcribe ſolely to the influence of this tenet, that indifference which they diſplay at the death of their children, their wives, or their friends. Superſtition, imbibed with the mother's milk, may be converted into ſentiment; but this ſentiment, like reaſon, operates only when the paſſions are weak, and always gives way to them when they are powerful. A plurality of wives, the uſe of baths, and the great variety of ſenſual pleaſures in which a Turk is engaged, diſtract him too much to render him ſuſceptible of a ſtrong affection for any one. On the

contrary, they make him an egotiſt; ſo that if he ſhews reſignation at the death of any of his relations, obſerving, while he continues to ſmoke his pipe without interruption, that it is what we muſt all expect, ſince man at his birth has imprinted on his forehead the marks of death, it is becauſe he feels nothing at the loſs—his ſoul having never been ſuſceptible of affection. Some, indeed, have been known to ſink into deſpair when deprived by death of a miſtreſs, or a friend, to whom they were paſſionately attached. The populace, who carry every thing to exceſs, abuſe the idea of predeſtination, even to a degree of brutality. During the plague, for inſtance, a wretch will buy the clothes of another wretch who has lately fallen a victim to that calamity, and at the ſame time obſerve that he experienced the death to which he was predeſtinated.

This dogma of fate is of great antiquity in the eaſt. In Homer, every thing is done by a deſtiny, to which Jupiter himſelf is as much ſubject as the loweſt of mankind. Crœſus, having loſt his kingdom from truſting too implicitly to the oracle of Delphos, ſent ſome Lydians to aſk the god, whether he were not aſhamed to have been inſtrumental in his ruin? and, if the Grecian deities, to whom he had ſhewn ſo much liberality, were not accuſtomed to be ungrateful? The oracle anſwered, "That the god himſelf could not ſtop "the decrees of fate." This is not the only theological opinion the Turks have received from the moſt ancient people of Aſia: they entertain another, which is likewiſe traditional,

tional, and which appears to me to do nothing leſs than tarniſh the idea of that divinity whom they otherwiſe deſcribe in ſuch glowing colours. It is the following: "After any ſignal "good fortune, be upon your guard; for it is a proof that "Heaven has great calamities in ſtore for you." But why ſo? The reaſon is as follows: "I think," ſaid Solon to Crœſus, "that the gods envy and diſturb the happineſs of "mankind; for, in the courſe of a long life, men are obliged "to ſee and to endure a number of things that are diſagree-"able to them." Herodotus remarks, that, after the departure of Solon, the anger of the gods fell upon Crœſus, "appa-"rently becauſe he thought himſelf the happieſt of men." "The great proſperity I have experienced of late," ſaid Amaſis king of Egypt, in a letter to his friend Polycrates, "alarms "me much, for I know how envious the gods are." This manner of accounting for the origin of evil, though deducible from the Pagan theology, which taught that the gods as well as men were born on the earth, is abſurd and contradictory in a deiſt. But the vulgar never have clear ideas of any thing which is ſuperior to mere objects of ſenſe; and the Turks, in this reſpect, are but vulgar.

The reſurrection of the dead is likewiſe an article of the Turkiſh faith. The ſigns which are to precede it, ſay they, are, that all animals will die, that the mountains will fly in the air like birds, and that the heavens will melt and flow over the earth.—And what is to become of the earth? This they never thought of.

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As to ablutions and circumciſion I ſhall only remark, that theſe two practices are of great antiquity in the eaſt; that they owe their origin leſs to caprice than neceſſity; and that, the better to enforce the obſervance of them, they have been always aided by the ſanction of religion. It would be ridiculous not to aſcribe circumciſion to neceſſity, ſince we are informed that ſeveral nations in Aſia would, without it, be uſeleſs for the purpoſes of ſociety. The Turks carry the practice of ablution to the ſame point as the Aſſyrians did, who, according to Strabo, purified themſelves every time they fulfilled the duty of marriage. Mahomet, by enjoining theſe obſervances, did no more than conform himſelf to received cuſtoms.—With reſpect to his prohibiting the uſe of pork, it was either becauſe this food, in the countries where he firſt introduced his religion, was unwholeſome; or, becauſe he thought that forbidding it would tend to gain over the Jews, who were very numerous where he preached his new doctrine, and induce them to embrace it; for an inſpired perſon thinks nothing can reſiſt him.

The Mahommedans believe both in the Old and the New Teſtament; and they often make alluſions to the Goſpel, ſometimes quoting what is in it, and ſometimes what is not. They contend, that the Chriſtians have altered and corrupted it, by retrenching, as they ſay, every thing that related to Mahomet; and they affirm, that the Jews have done the ſame to the Old Teſtament. They agree that God ſent the Goſpel to Jeſus the ſon of Mary, for whom

whom they entertain reſpect: and they think it ridiculous in us to call him the Son of God, it being, in their idea, nonſenſe to aſſign children to the Deity, who, according to the Koran, is an infinite being, neither begotten nor begetting any one. In a diſpute in which I was engaged on this ſubject with a derviſe, I had occaſion to remark his ability in defending his religion. This man was too learned for a Turk, and eſpecially for a derviſe. He was eloquent; and had a great reſemblance I preſume to our orators, who often try to perſuade others to believe what they do not believe themſelves. The following is nearly the ſubſtance of his ſpeech:—"A "direct and certain proof of the divinity of Mahomet's miſ- "ſion is, that the doctrine promulgated by that legiſlator is "diſſeminated in every part of the world; and that God has "puniſhed the incredulity of the Chriſtians and Jews, whoſe "number is ſo much inferior to that of the Mahommedans, "by the loſs of their property, and by making them tribu- "taries and ſlaves. Beſides, the prophet inculcates a mo- "rality which is ſo engraved on the heart that we carry it into "practice without the leaſt deviation. We do not deſpond "on loſing a ſon, or a friend, an employment, or even our "whole property; for ſuch is the will of the Almighty. The "morality of other prophets, on the contrary, partakes ſo lit- "tle of divinity that no one is amended by it. Man cannot "be perfect: this is proved by a very ſuperficial knowledge of "human nature; he may get rid of one paſſion, but not of "all: and in this view the morality of your religion is rather "a philo-

" a philoſophic theory, than a practical ſyſtem; and to prove " this, I appeal to the conſcience of every Chriſtian. Nature " may be ſtifled in fanaticiſm; but ſuch fits can be but of " ſhort duration. Add to this, that our religion does not de- " generate, and always retains a like influence over us. To " add weight to theſe arguments, I can alſo call miracles to " my aid—Mahomet drew water from his fingers; he more- " over marked the moon with his finger, and ſplit it. Even " ſtones, trees, and beaſts, recogniſed him for the true pro- " phet, and hailed him, by ſaying, ' Thou art the true envoy " of God!' It is well known, that in one night he went from " Mecca to Jeruſalem; whence he aſcended into Heaven, " where he ſaw Paradiſe and Hell, ſpoke to God, and found " himſelf again in Mecca before day-light. But I do not " mean to inſiſt on this article, becauſe every religion has " its miracles."—This you ſee is logic, and Turkiſh logic, which has little reſemblance to that uſed among us.

LETTER XXXIV.

Conſtantinople, Dec. 1788.

GALATA is one of the ſuburbs of Conſtantinople, ſituated oppoſite to the ſeraglio. It is ſurrounded by walls flanked with old towers. The gates are ſhut at ſun-ſet; but thoſe who wiſh to ſtay out until a certain hour, may find guards who for a few paras will open them. Pera is but a ſuburb of Galata, in which the ambaſſadors and all the other Franks reſide. It is a pretty Chriſtian town, in the midſt of Mahommedaniſm. The Jews, Greeks, Armenians, and Catholics have likewiſe ſynagogues, churches, and convents at Galata, as well as at Pera. Rabbins, caloyers, capuchins, cordeliers, &c. may be found in both theſe places. The Catholics have there an archbiſhop; and the Greeks a patriarch, who, with true Chriſtian humility, cauſes himſelf to be ſtyled "The moſt Holy Archbiſhop of Conſtantinople, Univerſal "Patriarch, &c." The titles of the other Greek biſhops, ſuch as thoſe of Antioch, Jeruſalem, and Alexandria, are no leſs pompous, eſpecially that of the latter, who ſtyles himſelf "The bleſſed Pope and Patriarch of the great City of Alex-

" andria, Lybia, Pentapolis, Ethiopia, and of all the Coun-
" try of Egypt, Father of Fathers, Paſtor of Paſtors, Prelate of
" Prelates, the Thirteenth Apoſtle, and the Univerſal Judge."
The patriarch of Conſtantinople exerciſes juriſdiction over the Greeks in European Turkey, the iſlands of the Archipelago, and thoſe in the Ionian ſea. He is choſen by twelve metropolitans, and confirmed by the grand ſignior. It is ſaid, that after his election he goes on horſeback, attended by the metropolitans, to the grand vizier, who addreſſes him nearly in the following terms: " Since your nation has
" deemed you worthy of directing them in matters of re-
" ligion, my maſter approves the choice of his *rajas*, and
" confirms you in this dignity, on condition that you incul-
" cate obedience to him, and to his ſucceſſors." The election of a patriarch never paſſes without buſtle and cabal; and the patriarchate always falls to the lot of the higheſt bidder. It ſometimes happens, that the oppoſite party is ſo powerful as to be able to depoſe the ancient patriarch, and to create a new one. The patriarch pays an annual tribute of from eight to ten purſes, each worth five hundred piaſtres, for the liberty of exerciſing his religion, and the right of taking cognizance of the differences which may ariſe between eccleſiaſtics and other individuals. In order to pay this ſum, he is obliged to lay the biſhops and archbiſhops under contribution, who extend the like rigour towards the *antipapas*, or archprieſts, and the papas: theſe again are obliged to abſolve all ſins for money, to perform miracles for money; and yet,

yet, with all theſe reſources, they are ſo poor, that, to avoid dying of hunger, they are under the neceſſity of working as day labourers.

The Greeks keep Lent four times a year, during the continuance of which they abſtain from meat, milk, cheeſe, and fiſh. In general they faſt on Wedneſdays and Fridays; becauſe on Wedneſday Chriſt was ſold by Judas, and on Friday was crucified; which might induce one to think that the Jews do not faſt on thoſe days. They are ignorant of the principles of their religion, and are altogether ſuperſtitious. Some of them, however, believe that the pains of hell are not eternal; which proves that there are free-thinkers every where. A papas here has lately tranſlated into Greek, "*The Spirit* "*and Syſtem of Nature*," to do ſervice, as he ſays, to his countrymen. But as the latter like neither the ſpirit nor the ſyſtem of that work, they have perſecuted him; and he is quite proud that his writings have procured him this honour. The Greeks maintain that the Holy Ghoſt does not proceed from the Son: they do not acknowledge the primacy of the pope, founded on the antiquity of their univerſal councils: they hold the Latins in deteſtation, and are quite aſtoniſhed that the learned among them do not embrace their ſyſtem; for they ſay, that if their books are referred to, they will be found to be right. This abhorrence, which they entertain for the Latin communion, was formerly fatal to a Greek emperor, who having introduced the ſervice of the Latin

church, was perſecuted by a faction, and at laſt ſtrangled by his own relations.

The Armenians, being of the communion of Eutychius, acknowledge but one nature in Jeſus Chriſt. Theſe people have their ſuperſtitions alſo. They have their patriarchs, archbiſhops, biſhops, doctors, ſecular prieſts, and monks. They have three patriarchs, one of whom reſides in Armenia the leſs; and who has the right of appointing and conſecrating the two others, who are eſtabliſhed at Jeruſalem and Conſtantinople. The ſituation of theſe patriarchs is not ſo bad as that of the Greek patriarchs; but, on the other hand, they have not ſuch high-ſounding titles. Baptiſm with them, as among the Greeks, is performed by immerſion. The Greeks and Armenians hold each other in ſuch abhorrence, that if an Armenian enters a Greek church, the former immediately imagine that it is profaned, and they conſecrate it anew. They excommunicate each other inceſſantly; and this to us ought not to appear ſtrange.

As for the Jews, they ſtill expect the Meſſiah; and obſerve the ſabbath ſo rigidly, that were it to be attended with ruin to their affairs, they would not do any work on that day; for the ſmalleſt labour then, they conſider as a heinous crime. Mahomet ſays, and probably by way of ridicule, in one part of the Koran, that ſeveral Jews were turned into monkeys for having violated the ſabbath; and that at the end of three days they died. In another place he ſays, that thoſe who

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remain of the families of Moſes and Aaron, ſhall be carried into heaven by angels. For the Mahommedans place the Jews one degree below the Chriſtians in hell; and Herbelot obſerves, that an apoſtate Jew endeavours to prove that they have incurred this ſentence, for having corrupted in ſeveral places the text of the holy ſcriptures. Among the many peculiarities of a people at all times celebrated for their ſuperſtition, there is one, which, on account of its ſingularity, is worthy of notice. When the Jeweſſes are with child, and the pains of labour come on, they invoke, with the utmoſt devotion, the aſſiſtance of the Virgin Mary. But as ſoon as they are brought to bed, the ſervant ſweeps every corner of the room to drive her out, ſeveral times exclaiming, *Mary, get hence.*

The influence which government and religion have on the characters of theſe different people living under the ſame climate, is very ſtriking. The Turk is ſerious, grave, and courageous; he has a reſolute look, is attached to his predeſtination, ſpeaks very little, and ſeldom laughs. He is humane, except when a rigoriſt; and honeſt in his dealings, but always ſuſpicious. The Greeks dread the Turks, and deteſt at the ſame time that they flatter them. They are ſubtle, inſinuating, diſſembling, and cunning; and have retained in trade that *Græca fides* which has paſſed into a proverb. They are ſophiſtical, prattling, ſocial, hoſpitable, and active, and are extremely fond of feſtivals and balls.

The Jews, in their behaviour towards the Turks, are more abject

abject and cringing than the Greeks, becauſe they are worſe treated by them. They poſſeſs ſpirit and eloquence; but that ſpirit is a ſpirit of avarice, tranſmitted to them from their anceſtors, and their eloquence is that which ariſes from a love of gain. By being conſtantly accuſtomed to hear themſelves called by their name, that is to ſay, knaves, they are no longer aſhamed of it. They act as brokers to the Franks and the Turks; are active, and aſſiſt and eſteem each other, as much as they are deſpiſed by every body elſe. They complain moſt bitterly of this contempt, obſerving of the Chriſtian and Mahommedan religions, that they are ungrateful daughters, who, being as it were in a ſtate of contention, rend the boſom of their common parent. They form a conſiderable part of the population in Mahommedan countries; and the indifference with which the Turks behold them increaſe in riches and numbers, without adverting to the vexations they may one day experience from theſe people when they become powerful, is truly wonderful. The modern Jews do not ſeem to have degenerated from their anceſtors; for Tacitus, in ſpeaking of them, ſays, "*Apud ipſos fides obſtinata miſericordia in promptu; ſed adverſus omnes alios hoſtile odium.*"

The Armenians are active, ſober, frugal, and induſtrious. In general they are very honeſt people; and are richer than the Greeks, as the interior commerce of the Levant is carried on by them.

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LETTER XXXV.

Conſtantinople, Dec. 1788.

NOTHING in the world can equal in beauty the channel of Conſtantinople. It ſeparates Europe from Aſia; and its greateſt breadth no where exceeds two miles. Theſe two continents from time to time preſent moſt pictureſque views. Near a village, called *Beſci Taſci*, where the grand ſignior has a country houſe, the view is delightful. Conſtantinople, Pera, and Scutari, form a vaſt amphitheatre, which ſeems to encloſe the Boſphorus. The views, by acquiring a new variety, become more and more intereſting and agreeable as you recede from Conſtantinople. They conſiſt ſometimes of villages, ſometimes of valleys, ſhaded by gloomy foreſts, and hills planted with the linden, the aſh, the poplar, and the plane-tree, whoſe towering heads are loſt in the clouds, and under whoſe eternal ſhade the weary traveller ſeems invited to repoſe. In other places, nature appears to have ſo far forgotten herſelf, as to impreſs the beholder with terror, which ſhe alone has the art of rendering pleaſant. Here the mountains ſeem to unite together to prevent a paſſage; there, they

they appear to ſeparate in order to afford one; and this illuſion continues till the moment when the Pontus Euxinus begins to appear: the charm then ceaſes, and every thing reſumes its natural ſituation. The chief villages on the European continent, which embelliſh the banks of the channel, are *Bujukduré*, *Tarapia*, and *Belgrado*.

The weather being very fine, we enjoyed great pleaſure on our paſſage from this varied ſpectacle. We received a further ſatisfaction in reflecting, that theſe places formerly were adorned with an infinite number of temples and altars dedicated to Jupiter, the diſpoſer of winds, to Mercury, to heroes, and to marine gods. From not knowing preciſely where *Phinopolis*, the court of king Phineas, was ſituated, we thought we ſaw it every where. The view of Thrapia recalled to us the remembrance of Medea, who anchored in this bay, and of the fatal deſtiny that befel her.

Though this channel is five leagues in length, and in ſome places is very rapid, we traverſed it by the help of a favourable wind in four hours. Having paſſed through the midſt of the Cyanean iſlands (which Phineas adviſed Jaſon to paſs in fine weather, otherwiſe, ſaid he, the ſhip Argos, were it of iron, will be daſhed to pieces), we landed near the European light-houſe, at a Greek village ſituated on the ſhores of the Black Sea, ſo much dreaded by the ancients. This Cyanean iſland, which is near the European ſide, is nothing but a ſhoal, ſeparated from the continent by a very narrow arm of the ſea. Here are the remains of a colonnade

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of white marble, called after Pompey, though it has as little relation to that general, as the caſtle of the cape of Scutari, called Leander's Tower, has to that hero. Here are ſome Roman letters, of which the only legible ones are CLA : : : RONTO. The light-houſe is nothing but a high tower, the ſummit of which, made like a belfry, is filled with lanterns. This light-houſe, as well as the other, which is oppoſite to it, is lighted every night for the convenience of thoſe ſhips which the tempeſts, frequent in the Black Sea, drive upon the rocks. If credit may be given to an ancient writer, this ſea was originally only a lake, and Europe and Aſia formed one continent, which, in proceſs of time, became divided by a ſudden overflowing of the lake.

We at length quitted the village to again enter the Boſphorus, where we were ſoon after overtaken by a ſhower; the wind became contrary; the ſea roſe to a great height; and the waves breaking violently around the boat, ſeemed to menace its deſtruction. We tried, but in vain, to make way by frequently tacking. A furious gale had almoſt put an end to our troubles; the boat rolled very much, and the ſea breaking over it, drenched us thoroughly. The ſailors, being drunk, truſted me with one of the oars: a ſecond gale now ſucceeded; they cried out to me to let go the tack; but inſtead of this I held it faſt, though I knew not the reaſon why I did ſo; I had, however, almoſt overſet the boat by it. It became at length neceſſary to yield to the ſtorm, and to ſtrike the maſts, one of which was already ſhattered. The

currents drove us againſt a battery on the banks of the channel, where we landed with a great deal of difficulty, in a place full of ſharp rocks. The janiſſaries invited us to refreſh ourſelves at a little cottage: we accepted their offer the more readily, as we were wet; and we here found a good fire and coffee. Theſe people gave us their company, and entertained us in the beſt manner poſſible. Our converſation, however, could not prove very agreeable to them; for their geſtures were as unintelligible to us as their language. The rain having ceaſed, we reimbarked, though the wind ſtill continued contrary; and our ſailors were in the ſame ſituation as before. In ſhort, at eleven o'clock at night we were driving at the mercy of the winds and waves. Dejection, wearineſs, wet, and cold, at length obliged us to approach a village in the ſame gulf in which the Argonauts anchored above three thouſand years ago.

Our firſt care on landing was, to ſet about gathering wood as faſt as poſſible; but we could procure only ſome wet briers and brambles. Whilſt we were lighting a fire, we perceived that two of our companions were miſſing. We called them with ſo much vociferation as to awaken all the dogs in the village. Men were ſent every where in queſt of them, but without ſucceſs. This threw us into an anxiety, from which we were not relieved until we ſaw them appear. They had been amuſing themſelves with walking round the village; and having ſeen a light in a houſe, they knocked at the door. This happened to be a Turkiſh coffee-houſe; and by means

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of a Jew, who ſpoke a little Italian, they gave the maſter to underſtand, that they and their friends wiſhed to paſs the night at his houſe, to which he conſented. This news afforded us much pleaſure; and we all went there as ſoon as poſſible. The maſter of the coffee-houſe, whoſe phyſiognomy beſpoke the goodneſs of his heart, ſeeing us wet and ſhivering with cold, haſtened to make a good fire: he then preſented us with coffee, and treated us with a baſket of grapes. As the room contained but two alcoves, he gave us up his own with the greateſt affability, together with all the pillows he had, which made us much more comfortable than we expected. Our mattreſſes were, it is true, only planks; but we were ſo fatigued, and ſo happy at having eſcaped the diſagreeable neceſſity of paſſing the night in the boat, that we never ſlept better.

By theſe means I had an opportunity of ſeeing coffee made in the Turkiſh manner. In a little chimney, built in the form of a niche, a kettle of water is conſtantly kept boiling. When coffee is called for, ſome of this water is poured into a little pot, containing a certain quantity of coffee. It is then made to boil twice or thrice, during which both ſides of the pot are beat with ſmall rods; and inſtead of leaving it to ſettle, it is ſeveral times poured out, and poured back again. It is then ſerved up without ſugar, in ſmall china cups, which have no handles, and which are generally placed on gilt tin ſaucers. Since I am on the article of coffee, I muſt not forget to tell you, that it is very much uſed here; and that there

is a place in Conſtantinople, where three hundred men are continually kept employed in burning and pounding all the coffee conſumed in the public places of the city. I have been informed by the Abbé Seſtini, that one thouſand ochas are prepared there every day, each ocha conſiſting of forty-two ounces. Were you ever diſpoſed to think, that all the coffee conſumed here comes from Mocha, this obſervation alone, I ſhould imagine, would cure you of your error. The luxury of true Mocha coffee is known only to the grandees, the rich, and to ambaſſadors, who procure it by means of the Perſian caravans. It may be had, however, but with great difficulty: and it is beſides very dear. One of my friends contrived to purchaſe a few ochas, for which he paid at the rate of ſeven piaſtres and a half per ocha.

The following day the wind ſtill continuing violent and contrary, I determined to return to Conſtantinople by land; but this reſolution drew upon me the raillery of my companions. I paſſed through Bujuk-deré, and ſeveral other villages, without meeting with any inſult, as the inhabitants were accuſtomed to ſee the Franks.

Bujuk-deré is a charming village, ſituated on the banks of the channel. The ambaſſadors and other perſons of diſtinction have their country ſeats here. At the end of the gulf is a fine meadow, in which is a ſuperb group of planes, together with ſome very high trees of the ſame ſort, diſpoſed in a circular form. This ſpot gives birth to the ſweeteſt reveries, from which one awakens with regret. The banks

banks of the channel are fertile, and well cultivated. But, alas, at the diſtance of only two miles from the ſea, what a ſtriking contraſt! Nothing is to be ſeen there but nettles and fern!

On my road, I paid a diſtant reſpect to the famous Aqueduct of Burgas. Nothing extraordinary befel me on the way, except that the Jew to whom my ſorry horſe belonged, and whoſe only harneſs was a packſaddle and a halter, made me diſmount twice; firſt at a village when I was near a moſque, and afterwards when I paſſed the country-houſe of the captain pacha. I was not able to gueſs his reaſon for doing this, as he expreſſed himſelf only by ſigns, which I did not comprehend.

The burial-places ſituated on the entrance into Pera, form a melancholy ſpectacle, which firſt attracts the attention of a traveller. Affected at the ſight of the tombs, and the cypreſs trees which ſurround them, and aſtoniſhed at the ſame time at the immenſe extent which the dead peaceably occupy by the ſide of the living, he is unable to refrain from that profound, but tranſitory penſiveneſs, which often conſtitutes ſome of our moſt agreeable moments. Alas, we are born then to die! How juſtly did Homer compare men to the leaves of trees! No tombs but thoſe of the Turks are allowed to be adorned with cypreſs. Thoſe of the Jews, Armenians, and Greeks are ſurrounded only with mulberry and poplar trees. Theſe tombs are of marble: the moſt beautiful marble of antiquity announces, therefore, at preſent, the remains of

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ſome obſcure individual. I ſaw ſome women walking amongſt them with an air of piety and ſadneſs. I am informed that the Armenians and Greeks, during their feſtivals, after mourning in this place one day, come hither the next to divert themſelves. This cuſtom, which prevails among the Turks, of planting barren trees round their tombs, is of great antiquity; for we read in Homer, that the tomb of Aetion was ornamented with elms.

In the courſe of my ride, I ſaw a funeral proceſſion. The corpſe was borne upon the ſhoulders of four men, who were followed by mourners, and the Imam. They walked very faſt, apparently that they might not imitate our ſlowneſs on ſuch occaſions.

LETTER XXXVI.

Conſtantinople, Dec. 1788.

WE have had ſnow here for this fortnight paſt, accompanied with froſt and intenſe cold. The inhabitants of the country ſay, they have not experienced ſo ſevere a winter theſe ten years. The ſnow, however, does not prevent the Turks from going abroad. They take their walks as uſual, and employ a ſingular expedient to go down a deſcent; they place themſelves on a ſort of ſmall ſledge with four wheels, and, keeping firm in their ſeat, ſuffer themſelves to glide down, ſo that they get to the bottom before they have time to think where they are.

During this bad weather, there were fires in ſeveral parts of the city. I was witneſs to two of ſome extent; one at Galata, which was ſoon got under; and another at Conſtantinople, which laſted for eighteen hours. This conflagration deſtroyed a great number of houſes, among others, a part of the kaimachan's; and the flames had almoſt been communicated to the ſeraglio. The grand ſignior, as well as the captain pacha and principal officers of the Porte, haſtened to the ſcene,

ſcene, being all obliged to be preſent on ſuch occaſions; which cannot be very agreeable to the ſelf-entitled *Sovereign of the Univerſe, Shadow of God, Brother of the Sun, the Moon*, &c. The tower of the Porte at Galata, a work of the Genoeſe, and another at the houſe of the aga of the janiſſaries at Conſtantinople, ſerve to ſpread an alarm in caſe of fire: there is a guard appointed every night to this duty. There are other towers, however, beſides theſe, which are built on a curious conſtruction, increaſing in width in proportion to their height. Theſe fires purify the air; and ſerve in ſome degree to deſtroy thoſe remains of the plague, which lying concealed in old warehouſes, and repoſitories, tend to perpetuate this fatal contagion. The expedition with which houſes are built here is truly aſtoniſhing; you would almoſt think that it often ſurpaſſes the rapidity with which they are conſumed.

When the Turks are diſſatisfied with the government, it is by means of fire that they carry their complaints to the throne; and it is poſſible that thoſe which I have mentioned may have been ſymptoms of their diſcontent; for I have been lately informed, that the grand ſignior has ordered every body to bring their plate to the mint, where they receive for it one third leſs than the current price, to enable him to coin a new piece money of two piaſtres in value; and for the purpoſe of raiſing twenty-five millions (a project propoſed to the Porte by a Frank merchant, for the Turks know nothing of calculation), to ſupply the means of carrying on a war as

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little liked by the Turks as by our ambaſſadors. The very exiſtence of this empire is really ſurpriſing; every thing conſpires to its deſtruction; it has vices in its very conſtitution; and notwithſtanding this, it never loſes any part of its equilibrium.

A propos of war, ſoldiers arrive every day with German ſlaves. I ſaw at the houſe of the French ambaſſador three German country women, and two officers, whom he had ranſomed. One of them, who is an Hungarian, and ſpeaks Latin, told me that the Turks had not reſpected the modeſty of theſe women; and they bluſhed when he ſignified to them that he had told me ſo. The Turks in general treat their ſlaves very ill; they make them work like beaſts, and for this purpoſe often employ a ſtick. This, at leaſt, is what we are told by the ſlaves, who, like all thoſe who are wretched, exaggerate, perhaps, the miſeries of their condition.

The cold is ſtill intenſe. Few chimneys are to be ſeen; but there is ſomething more agreeable, which is the *tendour*. This is a chafing-diſh of coals, placed under a table, covered with a counterpane, which thoſe who want to warm themſelves put upon their knees: it exhales a gentle heat, which communicates itſelf to every part of the body. In thoſe houſes where the Greeks diſplay the greateſt luxury, they add a cover of ſatin or ſilk, embroidered with gold and ſilver: theſe embroideries are worked by the ladies.

A few days ago I entered a Turkiſh coffee-houſe quite alone; which I ſoon repented, on account of the reſpectability of

the company. They conſiſted of the loweſt rabble, Turkiſh ſoldiers and ſailors. I however drank my coffee very quietly; and all theſe people ſmoked their pipes without exhibiting any of thoſe emotions of mockery or ridicule, which an European dreſs might be ſuppoſed to excite in the populace. One of them, who looked like a renegado, addreſſed me in Italian, aſking me ſeveral queſtions, which, for the moſt part, related to the diſſatisfaction of the Turks at the war. Our converſation was interrupted by the arrival of a kind of beggar, who, after talking himſelf, and ſetting others to talk likewiſe, continued to harangue alone in a loud tone of voice. Every body was ſilent, and liſtened to him attentively. He told pretty ſtories, and droll adventures, though without exciting, as far as I could perceive, much merriment in his audience.

To this ſort of amuſement, which forms one of the principal diverſions of a Turkiſh coffee-houſe, may be added that of cheſs; a match at which has ſometimes been continued from father to ſon. The Turks devote whole days to this game; but they cannot play for money, that being expreſsly forbidden by their religion. Theſe however are not their only diverſions. They have their jugglers, and puppet-ſhows. Their farces are in the taſte of the nation; and abound with thoſe groſs alluſions which would formerly have been tolerated only at the feſtivals of Priapus. In the Abbé Seſtini's Letters on the Peninſula of Cyzicum, you will find ſome particulars on this ſubject, which I do not think myſelf entitled to detail.

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As to ſhort tales, the Muſſulmen like them ſo well, that they have borrowed ſeveral from the Chriſtians, which, according to the cuſtom of the country, they have embelliſhed; for in the eaſt this is the caſe with every thing. That of the ſeven ſleepers, for inſtance, they make to conclude very happily; for, in order to ſhew the force of good example, they ſay, that the dog, by remaining long with the men in the cave, became rational. According to Herbelot, they even aſſign him a place in heaven, in company with the aſs of Balaam, and that of the Meſſiah.

There are here a number of renegadoes, and to this many cauſes contribute. For example, if a Chriſtian is found in company with a Turkiſh woman, the alternative propoſed to him is, either to marry the woman, and abjure his religion, or to have his head cut off: and every body knows, that of two evils, it is better to put on a turban than to loſe one's head. Laſt week, two Frank ſailors, when drunk, promiſed to become Turks; and they have kept their word, notwithſtanding every effort of their ambaſſador's interpreter to prevent them.

LETTER XXXVII.

Conſtantinople, Jan. 17, 1789.

THE new year has introduced with it fine weather and amuſement. The ambaſſadors, and ſome of the Greeks and Franks, often give magnificent ſuppers and balls, which abound with all the delights of ſocial intercourſe. In order to complete the diverſions of the carnival, they have even formed maſquerades. Theſe balls are often frequented by young interpreters, whoſe groteſque air and preſbyterial caps would make Heraclitus himſelf laugh. As to the muſic, it is not good enough to be found fault with. The muſicians perceiving that the company dance with great pleaſure, conceive it to be owing to their ſuperior ſkill. On this account, they refuſed to play at the houſe of one of the ambaſſadors, becauſe the choice of the refreſhments was not offered to them.

It has been already ſaid, that the ancient Greeks danced more than any people in the univerſe. Dancing formed a part of their gymnaſtic exerciſes: it was preſcribed as a remedy in certain complaints; and it even entered into their military

military diſcipline. The paſſion of their deſcendants for this amuſement at the preſent day, ſerves in ſome meaſure to alleviate the miſeries attendant on ſlavery. Companies of boys from twelve to thirteen years of age, are maintained by perſons, who pay a certain ſum to the Turks for the privilege of being permitted to dance all the year round. When the taverns are open, theſe young people dance and perform pantomimes in them. There are here alſo itinerant female dancers, no leſs laſcivious in their dreſs than their geſtures; and who are called in wherever pleaſure is held in more eſtimation than virtue. If to gracefulneſs of manner they happen to unite the attraction of beauty, they overcome the auſterity of thoſe who behold them.

Since we are on the ſubject of dancing, I muſt not omit to mention certain derviſes reſiding at Pera, who are paſſionately fond of it. In general the Turks do not dance at all; they think in this particular as the Romans did; and, perhaps, this is the only thing they have in common with that celebrated people. Theſe derviſes dance twice a week in their moſque, on Thurſdays and Fridays. Any one is permitted to enter theſe moſques; for, as one of their preachers obſerves, it is poſſible that an Infidel may by theſe means be converted to the true faith. They dance in a circle, and with ſuch velocity as to cauſe their heads to grow giddy, which does not eaſily happen; for, as they are habituated to this ſenſation, they are not eaſily affected by it. They continue this vertical motion till the flute ceaſes, and then ſtop with a firm air, as

if

if nothing had happened. Over the gate of the convent they have a white cap, which is the device of the order. They go about bare-legged, and with their breaſts uncovered. They generally caſt their eyes downwards, but they readily raiſe them when women come in their way: they wear a ſhort brown woollen robe. Some of them are married; and their ſons, by embracing the ſame profeſſion, inherit the ſanctity of their fathers. Theſe people are held in ſuch reſpect, that if a criminal, or ſtranger aſſailed by the rabble, take ſhelter in their convent, he finds a more certain ſecurity there than he would in the ſeraglio itſelf. I am ſurpriſed, that as they live at their eaſe, and have nothing to dread from the grand ſignior, they ſhould not have increaſed the number of their convents. It is to be preſumed, that the Turkiſh government, notwithſtanding its ignorance, knows better than to grant full liberty to theſe leeches.

There is another convent of derviſes at Tophana: and the Muſſulmen have their Ignatius, their Bruno, their St. Francis, and their St. Anthony. There is one at Scutari, the derviſes of which perform very ſingular ceremonies. They dance once a week; and, from an exceſs of piety, mark themſelves on the face, and other parts of the body, with a red hot iron. A ſimilar ſpecies of ſuperſtition prevailed among the ancients. The prieſts of the Syrian Goddeſs, who were eunuchs, whipped each other on certain days, after drawing blood from their elbows. Lucian, in relating this circumſtance, adds,

adds, that the devotees among them all ſeared themſelves, ſome in the wriſt, and others in the neck: on this account, he ſays, all the Aſſyrians had about them marks of burning. Men muſt have conceived a terrible notion of God, before they could have reached ſuch a pitch of infatuation.

The principles of all theſe derviſes, were they to live up to them, are very auſtere; but here, as every where elſe, they only impoſe on the vulgar, whoſe fate it is to be conſtantly the dupes of the artful. Theſe prieſts conceal every vice under the garb of hypocriſy, intoxicating themſelves continually with wine, opium, ſtrong liquors, &c.

There is, however, a ſect among the Turks, called *Kalenders*, whoſe manner of thinking is very different from that of the derviſes whom I have been deſcribing; and what is uncommon, and not difficult, their practice correſponds with their principles. The maxim of theſe people, according to Rycaut, is, "This day we may call ours, to-morrow belongs to him "who lives to enjoy it." Hence, diſmiſſing every melancholy idea, they think of nothing but enjoying the preſent moment; and they ſpend their lives in eating, drinking, and amuſing themſelves. They maintain, that a tavern is as holy as a moſque; and by a toleration the more extenſive as it is a theological one, they imagine this kind of worſhip to be as acceptable to the Deity as that of thoſe who ſerve him with auſterity and ſubmiſſion.—There are none of this ſect here.

The

The Mahommedans, as well as all the Chriſtians of the eaſt, in order to give the greater ſanctity to monaſtic inſtitution, trace back their origin to the beginning of the world, and ſay, that among the children of God, the poſterity of Seth devoted themſelves to a monaſtic and religious life on the holy mountain.

LET-

LETTER XXXVIII.

Conſtantinople, January 1789.

I HAVE already mentioned the derviſes of Pera. In their burying-ground is the tomb of the famous Count Bonneval. The inſcription ſtates, that "he was a perſon held in high "eſteem among the Franks, and who to the good fortune "of embracing the true religion joined that of dying on the "birth-day of the prophet." This epitaph affords ſufficient proof, that the Turkiſh beaux eſprits may juſtly claim the honour of founding an academy of inſcriptions.

Bonneval himſelf never wrote the life which appears under his name; he acknowledged, however, that the author had juſtly delineated his character. Mr. De L—— was long in poſſeſſion of Bonneval's writings, and at length ſent them all to the Count de Bonneval in France, by means of Mr. St. P——, then ambaſſador at the Porte. This Mr. de St. P—— gained ſufficient materials from Bonneval's letters and memoirs to write his life. It is in the hands of Mr. de L——, who ought to make it public, for it is well written,

and contains many ſhort and ſenſible reflections, which render it intereſting.

The chain of misfortunes which compelled the Count de Bonneval to embrace the Mahommedan religion is well known. In order to avoid circumciſion, however, he had recourſe to artifice. He never went to prayers, even on a Friday; but he had an imam with him every day, to whom he humorouſly gave the title of his almoner. He often dined at the ambaſſadors' tables, where he ate and drank of every thing; but at his own houſe he neither ate pork nor drank wine, and he kept the ramazan very religiouſly. He had a French cook; and every Frank of his acquaintance, deſirous of dining with him, had only to ſay *Pilau*, and then another cover was added. The better to ſhew the genius of this celebrated man, I ſhall relate a few particulars, which, though they may ſeem trifling, will give you ſome idea of his character. I have them from Mr. de L——, who was intimately acquainted with Bonneval, and who was preſent at his death. In his dining-room were a great number of birds, and among the reſt ſeveral parrots. The moment the gueſts entered into converſation, theſe birds began to ſing, and the parrots accompanied them with a noiſe, that deafened every body, but which was highly agreeable to the count, to whom this harmonious muſic afforded infinite ſatisfaction. Before dinner was ſerved up, a machine filled with fragments of meat was introduced. The cats of the neighbourhood, to the number

number of three hundred, at a ſignal which he made, aſſembled together; and he threw to them the morſels, which the animals fought for till they deſtroyed each other. This ſpectacle amuſed him greatly. Among the reſt of the cats was a ſmall one, which, contrary to the nature of cats in general, was very filthy and diſagreeable; the count called this cat the *king's ſon*.

This extraordinary man kept no women in his houſe; he was always repeating this ſong: *Let us enjoy the preſent, the future is for fools*, &c. Ambition was his ruling paſſion, and led him into errors, which he could never afterwards retrieve. He was ſeen to cry one night during an entertainment at one of the ambaſſadors' houſes. Ideas, like habits, when contracted at an early period, are more ſenſibly felt as old age approaches, and the preſent moment ceaſes to intereſt: he began at a certain time of life to grow weary of his condition, and to regret his country and religion. He wrote therefore to his relations to ſolicit forgiveneſs for him. Meaſures were already concerted for his eſcape; and the pope was diſpoſed to give a favourable reception to this prodigal ſon, whom neceſſity had compelled to abjure his religion: but deſtiny, which always oppoſes the wiſeſt deſigns of us miſerable mortals, did not permit him to enjoy this felicity—the gout mounted again into his ſtomach, and killed him. A prieſt in diſguiſe had been ſent to his aſſiſtance; but being diſcovered by ſome Turks, he was driven out of the apart-

ment: he died in a ſort of tranſport, uttering theſe words: "When the hogs are out of the ſtable the door ſhould be "ſhut." Which ſhews that he was deeply engaged with Chriſtian ideas; for the averſion of the Turks to thoſe animals is well known.—He was a pacha of two tails, and had twelve thouſand piaſtres a year.

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LETTER XXXIX.

Conſtantinople, January 1789.

A GRAND dinner was given by Baron N—— a few days ago. Two Turkiſh ladies, who called to pay a viſit to his lady, were quite confounded when they ſaw the numerous company aſſembled there, and earneſtly begged leave to withdraw: at length, however, they yielded to the preſſing entreaties of the baroneſs, and ſeated themſelves in a corner of the room, where they remained all dinner time. On the gueſts riſing from table, they were terrified to ſuch a degree at the noiſe, that they ran to the door. The baroneſs endeavoured to remove their apprehenſions; but as they obſerved that the few ladies preſent were gone into another room with all the gentlemen, they told their friend, that they muſt go; "for (ſaid they), the women being ſo much fewer in number than the men, the latter will neceſſarily treat us with rudeneſs." When they ſaid this, the baroneſs could not refrain from laughter. The Turks being accuſtomed to conſider women in one point of view only, theſe good ladies could not conceive how the Franks ſhould conſider them in any other.

I ſhall

I ſhall add one more anecdote, to ſhew you that elegance of behaviour, wit, talents, and thoſe charms which among us render women ſo amiable, and enſure them a thouſand conqueſts inſtead of one, are things entirely foreign to theſe people. A Turkiſh nobleman dining lately in company with ſeveral ladies at an ambaſſador's table, aſked his opinion of a certain lady.—"She ſings well," ſaid the ambaſſador, "and expreſſes herſelf with much good ſenſe and elegance." "I conceive, I conceive," interrupted the Turk with that groſſneſs of manners peculiar to his country, "you will not ſay that ſhe is ugly; for my part, I would not give ſix paras for her." "And what think you of the other? She is young, has a fine ſhape, and dreſſes with great taſte. What do you ſay?" "I would not give a piaſtre for her. I am ſorry I cannot ſhew you my harem: there you would ſee the flower of youth, and the charms of beauty."

The Turks are not allowed to introduce men into their harems; but they are at liberty to ſhew them to ladies. An Engliſh lady found every thing there that the Turk had boaſted of: young girls, in whom elegance vied with beauty to render them captivating. What ſurpriſed her moſt, was to ſee a child of ſeven years old there, who had not yet been weaned. The girls who adorn theſe harems are the choiceſt beauties of Georgia, Circaſſia, Greece, Hungary, &c. There is a market here, where they are every day expoſed to ſale, but it is inacceſſible to the Franks.

Polygamy it is well known is of great antiquity in the eaſt.

Homer

Homer informs us that Priam had ſeveral wives; and that Hecuba teſtified no jealouſy on this account. If we reflect on the numerous armies, which, in ſpite of the ravages of the plague, have always poured from the eaſt, it would appear that polygamy is favourable to population. Mahomet, in adopting it, did no more than conform to eſtabliſhed cuſtoms; and he had ſufficient ſagacity to perceive, that no innovation would ever be made in this reſpect.

LETTER XL.

Conſtantinople, January 1789.

IF it appear wonderful, that a tribe of Tartars ſhould drive the Greeks out of Aſia, and attack them in Europe, eſtabliſh themſelves at Conſtantinople, ſpread terror through the univerſe, and extend their dominion over the iſlands of the Archipelago, Africa, and a great part of Europe; it ſeems no leſs ſurpriſing, that, in the ſpace of ſeven centuries, this people neither have invented nor improved any art or ſcience. Mahomet, it is true, after the example of other legiſlators, forbade the ſtudy of ſcience, becauſe it renders man too proud. He likewiſe inculcated poverty and ſelf-denial, as two points eſſential to ſalvation. According to a tradition, he ſaid one day to his ſlave Belal, "Conduct yourſelf ſo, that you may "come into the preſence of God, poor and not rich; for the "poor occupy the firſt places in his houſe." In the Koran, he ſays, "Thoſe who return to God ſerving him (that is, who renounce the good things of this world, and become inſenſible to pride and glory, from a conviction of their vanity) ſhall enjoy paradiſe." I need not remark, that of all theſe precepts,

precepts, there are none more rigidly obſerved than thoſe relating to ſcience.

The Turks will never make any progreſs in the fine arts, as long as they ſuffer themſelves to be influenced by I know not what religious principle, which prohibits them from carving or painting figures. They, however, ſucceed well in painting flowers and landſcapes. They have not wholly neglected the mechanical arts. There are ſhops in Conſtantinople where cornelians and all ſorts of marble are cut. They are well acquainted with the art of dreſſing and colouring leather. Their gold and ſilver ornaments on morocco are executed with equal elegance and taſte. In Galata there are ſeveral ſhops where they manufacture port-folios, which are in great requeſt among foreigners; and they have carried their ſilk and cotton manufactures to a conſiderable degree of perfection. They poliſh their black horn ſo highly, as to give it the appearance of a ſhell: they chiefly make ſpoons of it for their pilau. Their ſabres are eſteemed even among us.

Phyſic is held in honour among the Turks, and yet they do not cultivate that branch of knowledge. It is ſtrange that they ſhould make no ſcruple of truſting their lives in the hands of a Frank and an Infidel. A Turkiſh nobleman being ſeized with a violent convulſion fit, ſent immediately for a ſelf-created Frank phyſician, who bled him; and the ſick man having recovered, made him a preſent of ſixty ſequins. Gobbis,

an Italian, is the grand ſignior's phyſician, and has at preſent five hundred purſes at his diſpoſal.

The learning of the Turks (for they are not deſtitute of literature altogether) is uſually confined to a knowledge of the Alcoran, a book ſingular in its compoſition, being at once the code of their civil and eccleſiaſtical laws. Many Turks, however, amuſe themſelves with the annals of their own nation, and in tranſlating ſome Perſian authors, and ſome even in writing verſes in the Aſiatic ſtyle. Mr. de L——, who is well acquainted with the Perſian literature, aſſured me, that though the Turks are accuſtomed to imitate the Perſian poets, they are not themſelves deſtitute of original beauties. In Conſtantinople there are a printing-houſe and a public library founded by a vizier, who was paſſionately fond of letters. The books are for the moſt part printed. An Abbé T—— has lately publiſhed a Treatiſe on Turkiſh Literature. He has made extracts from the greater part of the books in this library, and, what is aſtoniſhing, without knowing a word of the language. The mode he adopted was as follows: An interpreter to the bailo of Venice read the titles, and ſome ſelect paſſage of the book, in Italian, and the Abbé made his notes upon it. But not being always able to have with him this interpreter, who really had a profound knowledge of the Turkiſh language, he was oftentimes obliged to have recourſe to perſons of inferior abilities. This method does not appear to me altogether unexceptionable: however, I am told that the work poſſeſſes merit.

There

There are ſchools or colleges here for the education and inſtruction of the *icoglans*, or young people deſtined to the grand ſignior's ſervice, and who afterwards attain to the firſt poſts of the empire.

LETTER XLI.

Conſtantinople, January 29, 1789.

AS this will be the laſt letter I ſhall write to you from this place, I am going to communicate to you ſome detached obſervations, in the order they preſent themſelves to my mind.

The Turkiſh dreſs is pretty expenſive; people in general wear rich ſable furs, and their turbans are made of very fine muſlin. The ſaſh which they bind round their robes is of Indian ſilk, and ſometimes coſts above one hundred piaſtres. When it is bad weather, and they do not wiſh to be ſeen, they throw a ſort of veil of very fine woollen over their turban, which likewiſe covers the face, and this they call a *ſcial*. What appears moſt curious is, that the grand ſignior, when he goes to the moſque, cannot make uſe of this veil were it to rain as hard as it could pour; the deſpot, on this occaſion, becoming the ſlave of his ſlaves, and of his own dignity.

The luxury of this people is oftentimes carried to exceſs. Selim Effendi, pacha of Boſnia, has a poniard ſet with diamonds, the value of which is eſtimated at upwards of ten thouſand louis. I am told nothing can exceed the magnificence

cence of his furniture. His coffee-cups are all of ſolid gold, and adorned with precious ſtones.

The Turks have excellent perfumes, and very agreeable ſweetmeats. A certain ambaſſador, who had a good opportunity of knowing what they do beſt, ſays, that there are moſt exquiſite diſhes ſerved up at the ſeraglio; and that their cinnamon *cream* is far ſuperior to ours. The ſhops abound with all ſorts of ſweetmeats, of which the Turks are remarkably fond. Among other things very common, and which the children often buy, is a ſort of blanc-manger made of flour; it is eaten with honey and roſe water. *Scerbet*, which is the common drink here, is uſually compoſed of water, honey, lemon, and roſe-water; or of ſugar and lemon only: theſe meats, liqueurs, and beverages, are ſufficient indications of their luxury.

We are apt to aſcribe the brutality of the Turks to their ſenſual mode of living. For my part, as I before obſerved, I ſhould be rather inclined to aſcribe it to their religion and government; for I am at a loſs to conceive how ſcerbet, coffee, baths, ſmoking, and the voluptuouſneſs of the ſopha, can render men ſavage, ſince theſe things tend, on the contrary, to ſoften both the body and the mind. A propos of their pipes: they are made of a red ſort of clay, have a beautiful form, and are very well gilt. Shanks made of cherry-tree ſhoots are moſt uſed, but thoſe of jaſmin are moſt eſteemed: when theſe are long and ſtraight, they are ſold for from thirty to forty piaſtres; on which account the Armenians and Greeks take

take all poſſible pains to prevent them from growing crooked. Pearl colour amber is preferred to yellow, for mouth pieces, and bears a higher price.

The ſheep here have long yellow fleeces, and the fat of their tails often weighs thirty pounds. I have obſerved, that the Turks prefer the meat of this animal to that of any other.

The captain pacha, apprehenſive that his great riches might expoſe him to the fatal nooſe, has conſtituted the grand ſignior his heir. This is an excellent precaution in a country where riches often coſt the poſſeſſor his life. Who would imagine, that this mode of diſpatching men could flatter the vanity of the Turks? I have heard ſeveral of them boaſt, that their anceſtors were deemed worthy of the grand ſignior's jealouſy, and had been expoſed to the fatal nooſe.

The Turks are ſtoics in reſpect to grief, and epicureans in reſpect to pleaſure; a ſtrange mixture, which it would appear ſound philoſophy alone could produce, but for which they are indebted to their religion and manners.

There are ſome Greek ladies here ſo amiable and intereſting, that foreigners find it difficult to quit Conſtantinople, after having once had the pleaſure of being acquainted with them. It muſt not however be ſuppoſed, that they carry their attachment to ſtrangers ſo far as to forget themſelves; for, in the companies I have frequented, I have more than once had occaſion to remark, that ſapphic love is ſtill agreeable to their taſte.

LETTER XLII.

Mycone, Feb. 7, 1789.

WE quitted Conſtantinople on the 30th ultimo; and had ſcarcely entered the Ægean Sea, when the wind, which had hitherto been in our favour, ſuddenly ſhifted, and detained us for ſome days amidſt the Cyclades. Our view was ſometimes directed towards one iſland, and ſometimes towards another, with that emotion naturally excited by the preſence of ſpots rendered for ever celebrated by the gods, heroes, and heroines, of the moſt remote antiquity. The tomb of Theſeus was preſent to our imagination when we ſaw Scyros; as was likewiſe the ſtory of Achilles diſguiſed among the women of Prince Lycomedes. We paſſed near Eubœa, the country of the Abantes, now called Negropont, which is ſeparated by the Euripus from Bœotia. Ariſtotle, it is well known, died at Chalcis, formerly a celebrated city in this iſland, to which he had retired from the perſecution of prieſts. On the continent oppoſite to Chalcis we ſaw, or rather imagined we ſaw, Aulis, famous for the ſacrifices of Iphigenia, &c. After having coaſted round Andros, Tenedos, and Delos,

we

we at length anchored with ſome difficulty in the port of this iſland.

It is thirty-ſix miles in circumference; and though the ſoil ſeems to announce nothing but ſterility, it produces wine, oil, barley, and figs. I do not know the reaſon why Virgil thought fit to call it *Celſa*, for it is not very elevated.

The inhabitants of this place are computed at four thouſand, the greater part of whom are engaged in commerce: they have ſome large galleys, as well as a great number of boats, and are accounted excellent ſeamen: they are not ill made, and, like the reſt of the Greek iſlanders, are ſomewhat tawny. The Turkiſh yoke is leſs ſeverely felt than is generally the caſe by the people of this iſland; and on this account an air of openneſs, ſincerity, and contentment is very apparent in their countenances, which is rarely to be found among the Greeks of the continent. A French, Dutch, and Engliſh conſul reſide here, though I do not think that any ſhips belonging to theſe nations touch at this iſland, except when obliged by ſtreſs of weather. The houſes are only one ſtory high, but they are neat and commodious. The churches and chapels are at leaſt equal in number with the houſes, and amount to upwards of three hundred: among the reſt is a Latin church. In the whole iſland there is no other water than what is drawn from a well in the village. There are here ſeveral pieces of marble, which the Myconians brought from Delos, in order to adorn their country.

The dreſs of the women is quite pictureſque, very much reſembles

reſembles that of the women of Argentiera, but it is not ſo clumſy. Were I a poet, I ſhould delight in giving you a deſcription of the Myconian beauties. A complexion like a roſe, fine black eyes, enchanting vivacity, a free and eaſy air, a fine and delicate ſhape, a ſmall foot, and ſo many other charms eaſier felt than deſcribed, fall to the lot of the greater part of them. Curioſity drew them in crowds around us; and they teſtified a pleaſure in talking familiarly with us, which made one of our company ſuppoſe that their virtue was not proof againſt temptation. He accordingly ſaid to one of the prettieſt of them, "Will you go along with me?" "No," replied ſhe, "for my huſband is handſomer than you." This anſwer gave infinite ſatisfaction to our pilot, in whoſe eyes the women of his nation are all Penelopes. As we were deſirous of purchaſing ſome poultry, and cotton ſtockings, for which there is a great demand here, theſe women were eager in offering us their merchandiſe, and followed us through the whole village.

We paſſed a large houſe in which we heard a great noiſe, and from which the people within were throwing plates through the windows. We aſked if it was a mad-houſe, and were told that it was the palace of an archon, that is, of a prince (for this is the title ſtill aſſumed by the richeſt and nobleſt among the Greeks); that they were making merry, which occaſioned the noiſe; and that at theſe feaſts archons are accuſtomed to break plates, as a proof of their magnificence. Our interpreter wiſhed us to go up, and obſerved, that

we ſhould be treated with great civility, which we did not in the leaſt doubt; for hoſpitality, and a love for ſtrangers, form now, as they did formerly, a part of the character of the Greeks.

Strabo obſerves, that the inhabitants of this iſland were ſubject to baldneſs, inſomuch that the epithet Myconian was applied to all who loſt their hair; and I have been told that the climate ſtill produces the ſame effect.

The iſland of Delos, called *Sdiles* by the modern Greeks, is three miles from Mycone. It is ſituated in the middle of the Cyclades, ſo called becauſe they form a circle round this iſland. It was here that Latona was delivered of Diana and Apollo, who, the moment of his birth, gave proofs of his heavenly deſcent by killing the ſerpent Pytho with an arrow. Mount Cynthus, it appears, muſt have undergone a very great change, ſince, if we may rely on the deſcription of the poets, it formerly covered the country with its ſhadow, while at preſent it is almoſt level with the iſland.

On viewing the remaining ruins of the once famous city of Delos, an obſerver cannot help ſighing at the inconſtancy and vanity of human purſuits, and is induced to exclaim with Pauſanias, "Fortune inceſſantly diverts herſelf with the affairs "of this world: nothing can reſiſt her power." What now remains of Mycene, which during the Trojan war commanded all Greece?—of Thebes in Bœotia, at once feared and reſpected by the Greeks?—of Thebes in Egypt?—of Orchomene, in the country of the Myneans?—and of Delos, once ſo flouriſhing by its commerce?—Alas, they are now no more!

LET-

LETTER XLIII.

Gibraltar, March 11, 1789.

AFTER a long and tedious paſſage, we are now performing quarantine in this bay, which diſcord has ſo often ſtained with gallant blood. Alas! when will men ceaſe to become dupes to the ambition of their rulers? What avails it to be enlightened, if we cannot diſcover that war can never be advantageous to any people; that this ſcourge is equally ruinous to the conqueror and the conquered; and that it is the height of madneſs to fill a life ſo fleeting and tranſitory with pain and anxiety? Excuſe theſe reflections: they are the more melancholy, as it is to be feared that the wiſhes in which they originate will never be realiſed.

This famous Calpe, one of the pillars of Hercules, has in it ſomething majeſtic. It is twelve hundred feet high, and its ſummit is conſtantly buried in the clouds. The town of Gibraltar is ſituated at the bottom of this mountain. On a view of this peninſula, which is only one mile broad and two in length, it may be perceived that nature has rendered it impregnable towards the eaſt, and that art has done the ſame in every other quarter, by planting batteries in the rock. Con-

ſidering the dryneſs of the ſoil, one is aſtoniſhed to ſee it ſurrounded on every ſide with gardens and orchards. The Engliſh have forced nature to bring forth whatever they pleaſe, inſomuch that the earth now produces oranges and potatoes in common with figs, lettuce, &c. Colonel Green has procured earth from Portugal in order to make a garden, which coſts him immenſe ſums, and which is without doubt the fineſt in the place.

The houſes are ſmall, but commodiouſly built; and the ſhops are fitted up in the Engliſh ſtyle. The town is lively; for it is inhabited only by ſoldiers, and every body knows that ſoldiers are never dull. The garriſon conſiſts of nine regiments, compoſing a body of five thouſand men. They are all very neat; they are exerciſed every day, and the moſt rigid diſcipline is kept up amongſt them. Notwithſtanding the difficulty of making an eſcape, two ſentries lately deſerted from Europa point.

The officers are never idle: when not engaged in military duty, their time is divided between the pleaſures of the table and of play. Sometimes they amuſe themſelves in fiſhing or courſing on the neutral grounds.

Attracted by the allurement of gain, there are here about two thouſand Genoeſe, Spaniards, Portugueſe, and Engliſh, who exerciſe various trades. There are likewiſe two thouſand Jews, almoſt all from Barbary, ſome of whom retain the dreſs of the country; and as theſe people are by no means held in contempt in this place, it is to them almoſt a land of promiſe.

The

The coin chiefly current here is Spaniſh. Proviſions are very dear. Port and ſherry are the only wines that can be procured at a reaſonable price.

A few days ago I ſaw a Jewiſh marriage. On the eve of the wedding day, the betrothed lady appeared in public in a hall hired for the purpoſe: ſhe was veiled, and attended by an old rabbi; and on her arrival, the populace ſet up ſuch ſhouts of joy, that it was found neceſſary to ſend half of them away. After remaining ſeated for ſome minutes on the *throne* (the name given to a ſeat covered with damaſk, at the foot of which was a cuſhion of the ſame ſtuff), an old woman took off her veil, and immediately afterwards coffee and ſweet-meats were ſerved up. Next day the bride and bridegroom went again at the ſame hour to the ſame place. The bride reſumed her former ſeat, the rabbi and the bridegroom ſtanding up before her. On the forehead of the latter was a ſmall ſcroll of parchment, on which were inſcribed the ten commandments; and his ſhoulders and breaſt were covered with large band of white ſilk. He poured ſome white wine into a glaſs preſented to him by the rabbi; and the latter, after ſinging a Hebrew hymn, which the ſpectators repeated, drank a little of the liquor, and then offered it to the bridegroom, who, after taſting it, let the glaſs fall into a ſilver baſon, by way of precaution againſt all ſorts of magic: he then laid hold of the bride's right hand, and put the wedding ring on her fore finger. The rabbi read the contract, containing ſeveral articles, among which were the two following: "That the

"huſband

"husband should not take his wife into foreign parts with-
"out her consent; and that should the parties wish for se-
"paration, the party first proposing it should be obliged to
"pay the other eight hundred piastres;" which seems intended to render a divorce more difficult. After reading the contract, the married lady took off her veil, the rabbi and the husband then drank again, and all the company withdrew. Directly over the head of the bride was a handkerchief suspended from the cieling, containing, as I was told, some pieces of money, intended to serve as an auspicious omen.

The bride wore false hair, according to the custom of the Jews of the country, which does not allow married women to wear their own hair. What seems most extraordinary in these marriages is, that the husband, after enjoying the first-fruits of marriage, abstains for a week from the nuptial bed, or for a whole fortnight, if he has married for the second time.

LETTER XLIV.

Gibraltar, April 1789.

ON digging amidſt the rock, a ciſtern very curious on account of its ſtalactites has been diſcovered on the northern ſide; and in another place, a well ſixty feet in depth, at the bottom of which in a reddiſh chalky gravel were ſome petrified bones: ſome of theſe, on being taken up, evidently appeared to have belonged to human bodies. Pedants, who pretend to know every thing, ſay, that in order to fix the epoch of the petrifaction of theſe bones, we are only to go back to the eighth century, that is to ſay, to the period when the Moors paſſed over to this continent. Philoſophers, however, are unable to come to any deciſion on the ſubject.

St. Michael's cavern is well deſerving of attention: it is extremely ſpacious; and its depth, which is upwards of one thouſand feet, much exceeds that of Antiparos, according to Mr. F——, who has ſeen them both. The entrance into this grotto is near the ſummit of the rock: theſe places formerly were extremely ſteep; but at preſent the way up is by ſmall well beaten paths. We deſcended into it by the help of a cord,

cord, to prevent us from ſlipping; for the ſlope is very ſteep; and paſſing between two pillars into a ſaloon eighty feet high, the ground of which preſents a magnificent ſpectacle, we came into a ſort of Gothic theatre, adorned with columns and curtains, and hung round with feſtoons. To obſerve it the better, we procured lighted torches, and were loſt in admiration in contemplating the works of that inviſible architect, who is ever active, and almoſt always ever unknown. On one ſide of this theatre is a dark hole, which cannot be entered without flambeaux. It is a precipice which comes out on a level with the ſea, and which is ſo ſlippery, that notwithſtanding the ropes which the paſſenger holds by, he runs a continual riſk of breaking his neck in the deſcent.

The ſoldiers, after working and poliſhing the foſſils, make them into ſmall toys, which are very pretty.

To the north is a Mooriſh caſtle, built probably about the time when the Moors invaded Spain, which was towards the beginning of the eighth century. They entered by Algeſiras, called the ancient Gibraltar, which the Spaniards retook in the middle of the fourteenth century, after a long ſiege, the firſt in which cannon were uſed.

In ſome parts of this rock diamonds have been found, which have a very fine luſtre even when uncut.

A very good police has been eſtabliſhed in this town, which is governed by a general; and next to Ireland and Jamaica it is ſaid to be the beſt government under the Britiſh crown. The governor's palace was formerly a convent. There are here

here daily eighty guards and two hundred ſentries. It is very entertaining, after the ſecond evening-gun, to hear the whole rock reſound, with the ſyſtem of Leibnitz, *All is well!* which the ſentries repeat every quarter of an hour, when all really is well. Since the laſt war, this place has been conſtantly ſupplied with ammunition and proviſions ſufficient for three years: but vegetables, fruit, lemons, and excellent oranges are imported hither from the coaſt of Barbary; Portugal ſupplies it with wine, Marſeilles with preſerves and perfumes, and Genoa with ſweetmeats.

The bay is ſpacious, and abounds with plenty of fiſh. The fleet now here conſiſts of fourteen men of war, two of which make an annual cruiſe into the Levant, to protect the Britiſh trade. This bay ſerves likewiſe as a rendezvous for the veſſels of other powers, which, on their entrance, always ſalute the Engliſh admiral and the garriſon.

Great toleration prevails here: the Catholics have a church, at the door of which a ſentry is always poſted, to protect them from inſult; and the Jews are better treated here than any where elſe. As to the ſoldiers, they are excuſed from worſhipping God between four walls: after the example of an ancient people, they offer up their prayers every Sunday in the open air, on the parade.

Adieu! we are going to ſet ſail for Africa.

LETTER XLV.

Tunis, July 5, 1789.

ON quitting Gibraltar, we went to pay our reſpects to Abila, the other pillar of Hercules, ſituated near the town of Ceuta, which belongs to the Spaniards, and which is moſt delightfully ſituated. As we always had a contrary wind, we ſometimes viſited the coaſt of Barbary, and ſometimes that of Spain. At laſt, after a calm, which prevailed for ſome time, the wind became favourable, and we arrived at Cagliari, the capital of Sardinia, where we remained only a few days.

This city is built on a hill: the ſtreets are wide, and the houſes pretty good. The inhabitants are ſuppoſed to amount to nine thouſand: and, as is the caſe throughout all Italy, there are here a great number of prieſts, monks, and nuns, who live very much at their eaſe. There are a great many printing-houſes, and bookſellers, who publiſh a variety of religious books; but without becoming much richer, or the people more religious. As I was paſſing a garden, I ſaw a group of monks, ſoldiers, hair-dreſſers, and young girls playing

ing together in a very familiar manner, a ſcene which would have ſurpriſed me very much in any other place.

The air in the environs of Cagliari is ſo unwholeſome, that the nobility are obliged to poſtpone their rural amuſements till autumn. I am aſſured that the king of Sardinia expends all the revenue of the iſland in maintaining the ſuite and attendants of the viceroy. There are here always large and ſmall galleys; which are not much dreaded by the Barbarians, for they often approach the coaſts without meeting them. As we were coming out of Cagliari, we ſaw a fleet of twelve ſmall Neapolitan feluccas, armed with patereros, to defend them againſt the pirates. We proceeded thence to Tunis, and came to anchor in the bay.

Tunis is ſituated on the banks of a lake ſix miles from the ſea. The epithet of *white* was formerly given to this town, from the colour of the ground on which it is built. The fortreſs is a ſtriking object, on account of the ſolidity of its walls, and the multitude of cannon mounted on its works. There is a communication between the lake and the ſea, by means of a very narrow channel called *Goletta*, over which is a draw-bridge that opens to afford a paſſage for boats and barges. The lake abounds with roach; and great numbers of birds of various kinds are continually ſeen hovering around it. No one is allowed to ſhoot any of theſe birds, and on this account they increaſe amazingly.

Before the laſt plague, Tunis contained upwards of 200,000 inhabitants, but at preſent there are no more than 100,000.

The houſes are built of brick and ſtone; they are for the moſt part only one ſtory high; and their roofs are platforms, on which the inhabitants ſleep during the intenſe heats. The ſtreets are narrow; in the greater part of them there are brick arches ſupported on pillars, ſo that the paſſengers are in ſome meaſure ſheltered from the ſun. Two ſtreets in particular are remarkable for the richneſs and elegance of the ſhops which adorn them. One of them is called the Cap-makers, after the people who inhabit it, and who ſupply all Bombay and the Levant with red caps: and the other the Goldſmiths, in which may be found all ſorts of pearls and precious ſtones in great abundance. As no foreigner is allowed to ſee the moſques, I ſhall ſay nothing more of them than that they are pretty well built. As to the ſteeples, they differ no otherwiſe from thoſe of the Turks, than in being of an octagonal form, and covered with delft ware. There is no water here but rain water, which is preſerved with great care.

The city is ſurrounded by a ſtrong wall, and the gates are ſhut every evening at ſun-ſet. The Chriſtians have churches, and the Jews have ſynagogues here; a privilege granted them in all Mahommedan countries. There are conſuls here from the courts of France, Spain, England, Holland, Denmark, and Sweden, who every day hoiſt their reſpective flags on the tops of their houſes. We are accommodated at the houſe of the Engliſh conſul, who loads us with civilities.

The tombs are without the city; they are conſtructed in the form of vaults, and they are often whitened: a very ancient

cient cuſtom in the eaſt, for theſe *ſepulchra dealbata* are mentioned in the ſcriptures.

The ſurrounding country, which is very fertile, and well cultivated, abounds with a profuſion of fruit, ſuch as almonds, pears, apples, plums, figs, apricots, grapes, melons, &c. The trade of this place conſiſts in horſes, wool, eggs, oſtrich feathers, black ſoap, corn, olives, oil, dates, &c.

LET-

LETTER XLVI.

Tunis, July 6, 1789.

THE complexion of the Tuniſians is ſwarthy, eſpecially that of the lower claſs of people; but thoſe who, from their circumſtances, are not obliged to be conſtantly expoſed to the ardent heat of the ſun, are much fairer.

The Tuniſian women are not ugly, but they are not thought handſome unleſs they are very fat; ſo that thoſe to whom nature has been ſparing of this quality, ſupply the defect by a profuſion of clothing, which proves the idea of beauty to be leſs the effect of reality, than of habit and caprice. When they are about to be married, they make black lines on their foreheads, paint their cheeks of a reddiſh colour with the leaves of a plant called hanna, and blacken the tips of their fingers. In order to ſcreen themſelves from the ſun when they go out, they cover their faces with black bandages, which they tie under the chin.

The *bazar* is every morning filled with negro women, who form here a conſiderable article of trade. Theſe ſlaves are clothed in a ſort of white woollen robe, that ſerves as a veil,

veil, and covers their whole body except the arms, the ſole ornaments of which are leaden bracelets. They ſit on benches in a court-yard: the maſter takes one or two at a time, whom he leads ſlowly along, and mentions their price in a loud tone of voice. The purchaſer ſteps forward, advances towards the ſlave whom he wiſhes to buy, opens her mouth, feels her arms, breaſts, and thighs, and then makes her walk before him. The ſerene and gentle air of theſe unfortunate beings ſeemed to indicate, that they were inſenſible to the hardſhips of their lot: ſome of them even could not forbear ſmiling whilſt they underwent this ſtrange examination.

Perceiving, among theſe negreſſes, a young girl whoſe features were tolerably regular, and of a well proportioned ſhape, I ſhewed her to a Tuniſian of my acquaintance, who had juſt bought a very ſtrong one, and aſked him why he had not made choice of the former? Becauſe, ſaid he, I ſhould have found it difficult to get rid of her. You did not buy her then, replied I, with an intention to keep her? By no means; it is only with a view to profit; for I yeſterday got two hundred piaſtres for one who coſt me only one hundred and fifty.

The Franks are not allowed to buy theſe negreſſes; it is even difficult for them to get introduced into the place where they are ſold. Being deſirous of drawing near, in order to obſerve the manner in which theſe bargains were made, a Tuniſian took me by the arm, and deſired me to withdraw.

We have been to pay a viſit to the bey. As he reſides

two

two miles out of the town, we went to his habitation in a ſort of two-wheeled carriage, furniſhed with a mattreſs and cuſhion, and with a ſemicircular covering: theſe are the only carriages made uſe of in the country. The palace of the bey has the appearance of a ſmall town, and is ſurrounded by walls flanked with towers, on which cannon are mounted. After traverſing ſtreets crowded with merchants, we found ourſelves in a ſpacious court, where a great multitude of people were aſſembled to obtain juſtice from the bey, who adminiſters it regularly every morning. At the end of this court is a ſuperb portico of marble, the aſcent to which is by a magnificent ſtair-caſe; and under this portico we ſaw the bey ſitting gravely, upon a very elevated ſeat, covered with cuſhions made of blue ſattin ſtuff trimmed with ſilver. He was ſurrounded by his principal officers and other perſons, who were all ſtanding. Though armed with piſtols and poniards, he had an engaging air; received us with affability, and made us ſit down upon ſtools brought on purpoſe for us. We were preſented to him with our ſhoes on, notwithſtanding the etiquette which requires them to be pulled off, or to appear in ſlippers. He ordered coffee to be ſerved us by Chriſtian ſlaves, whoſe look ſeemed expreſſive of content. Theſe ſlaves are very numerous, and are for the moſt part Malteſe, Neapolitans, and Romans. The bey uſes them ſo well that, far from regretting, they congratulate themſelves on their ſlavery. The Mahommedan ſlaves amongſt us are not treated in the ſame manner; but, in return, we make

a great

a great parade about brotherly love and evangelical morality.

The bey permitted us to ſee his palace. A Genoeſe, who ſerves him in quality of a phyſician, was our guide. Beſides the great hall of the divan, the cieling of which is ſupported by pillars, there is nothing remarkable but two rooms, the pavement of which and the walls are of different coloured marble. In one of theſe rooms we ſaw an infinite number of looking-glaſſes placed at ſuch a height as rendered them wholly uſeleſs. If this cuſtom had not its origin in ignorance and bad taſte, it is doubtleſs founded upon ſome prejudice which I am unable to gueſs.

We ſaw nothing intereſting in the garden but a banana; the plant hanna, ſome orange trees loaded with fruit, a great quantity of double jeſſamines; and a belvedere, the only ornament of which was a magnificent ſopha placed near a ſpouting fountain, the baſon of which was filled with variegated fiſh; and its waters, while they refreſhed the air, ſerved to break the ſilence that reigned around. The belvedere admits light by gratings made of painted wood, along which grow jeſſamines that diffuſe a ſweet ſmell around, and render it impervious to the ſun.

We then went into the ſtables, where we ſaw upwards of two hundred old horſes, ſome of which had three of their feet and their tails painted with hanna, and others were bedaubed all over with it. We were afterwards conducted to

the menagerie, which contains nothing but lions and tigers chained in paltry wooden cages.

The bey, whoſe power is abſolute and hereditary, is nevertheleſs obliged to pay annually to the grand ſignior a pretty conſiderable tribute. Beſides his own domains, he has ſome other revenues ariſing from taxes, and the prizes made by the corſairs; and he is able to maintain a body of ten thouſand horſe. He makes himſelf reſpected by his ſubjects; and though dependent on the grand ſignior in a certain degree, he does not, it is ſaid, ſtand in awe of him.

Seeing on my arrival here ſome people clothed in long robes of very dirty woollen cloth, and ſitting in the middle of the ſtreets with their arms reſting upon their knees, I took them at firſt for beggars, vagabonds, or half-ſtarved wretches; but I ſoon perceived this to be the mode of dreſs common to all the inhabitants. Who would imagine ſuch beggars are the allies of the greateſt potentates in Europe?

LETTER XLVII.

Carthage, July 8, 1789.

Urbs antiqua fuit, Tyrii tenuere coloni,
Carthago, Italiam contra Tiberinaque longe
Oſtia: dives opum, ſtudiiſque aſperrima belli.

ÆNEAS in Virgil ſeems quite aſtoniſhed to ſee a magnificent city, riſing upon a ſpot occupied a little before by cottages.

Miratur molem Æneas, magalia quondam.

What a ſtrange revolution! Time, which deſtroys all things, has annihilated Carthage; and the cottages again appear.

Carthage was ſituated about ten miles from Tunis, upon three hills of a peninſula which is nearly forty miles in circumference. This ſuperb city was twenty-three miles round, and contained ſeven hundred thouſand inhabitants. No traces of it now remain, except the ruins of ſome reſervoirs, one of which is very ſpacious, and in pretty good preſervation. There ſtill remain ſome very thick walls of a fortreſs, ſuppoſed to be that of Byrſa. But what really deſerves attention is an aqueduct built of free ſtone, which has in part reſiſted the ravages of time. It was originally ſeventy feet

in height, and fifty miles in length. On the ſpot where it begins, are the ruins of a magnificent temple, a view of which Mr. B—— has drawn. In the bed of the ſea are found drains, and other remains of buildings, which prove that the ravages of that element have not been able to effect the entire deſtruction of Carthage.

The adjacent country produces corn, vegetables, and fruit, and is interſected with veins of porphyry, verd antique, &c. Moſaic pavements may alſo ſtill be ſeen; one in particular, which is in excellent preſervation, and which appears to have belonged to a temple.

I need not tell you, that in laying the foundations of this city, the Carthaginians found a horſe's head; and that from this circumſtance they inferred, that the nation would be warlike and victorious. It was for this reaſon that their medals bore the impreſſion of that animal's head. Great numbers of theſe medals in copper are every day dug up, and we have bought ſome of them.

In landing here towards Salines, the Bedouins or Arabs firſt attracted our attention. Theſe Arabs anſwer to the deſcription which Virgil has given of the herdſmen of Numidia.

Quid tibi paſtores Lybiæ, quid paſcua verſu
Proſequar, & raris habitata mapalia tectis?
Sæpe diem noctemque & totum ex ordine menſem
Paſcitur, itque pecus longa in deſerta ſine ullis
Hoſpitiis: tantum campi jacet. Omnia ſecum
Armentarius Afer agit, tectumque, Laremque
Armaque Amyclæumque canem Creſſamque pharetram.

Virgil,

Virgil, it is well known, means by Lybia, Africa in general; and by Armentarius Afer, the ſhepherds of Numidia.

One of theſe Arabians came to meet us, and aſſiſted us in finding game. We killed a hare, ſome pigeons and partridges, of which laſt there are great quantities here. I cannot deſcribe to you the pleaſure we felt in traverſing this country, which formerly made the capital of the univerſe tremble. This ſpot had charms to us, which ſeemed to increaſe our grief at quitting it before we had well examined every thing to be ſeen in it. We exerted ourſelves therefore in picking up pieces of marble and porphyry; and the Arab, in order to ingratiate himſelf into our favour, did the like, and preſented them to us. We carried them along with us, as if we had thought theſe mean tokens neceſſary to remind us of our having been at Carthage.

As the heat increaſed, and we were extremely thirſty, we approached a village, where we perceived a group of men and women engaged in drawing water from a well to water a garden. We made ſigns to them to give us ſome milk, and were fortunate enough to make ourſelves underſtood. A crowd of people now aſſembled round us, ſome of whom brought us pigeons, which they wiſhed to ſell at an exorbitant price; others aſked us for powder; and ſome viewed with aſtoniſhment our dreſs and our guns. At laſt they brought us ſome milk; and though it was ſour, we thought it excellent. We gave a piaſtre to the man who ſold it, and expected to receive change; but after examining it, he put

it into his pocket, ſignifying, that it was exactly what we were indebted to him.

The Arab now conducted us to his tent, where we found an old man ſitting upon a mat, with a pipe in his mouth, and amuſing himſelf with a little dog. After talking a long time by ſigns without being able to underſtand each other, the old Arab, drawing up a curtain which divided the tent, took from a large caſe ſome eggs, pigeons, and figs, which he begged us to accept. In return we gave him all the powder and ſhot we had, which afforded him a great deal of pleaſure.

We now perceived a troop of Arabs and their wives advancing towards us, and driving before them a flock of camels and ſheep. This viſit was not very agreeable; for notwithſtanding the civility of our landlords, we had not the beſt opinion in the world of theſe deſcendants of Iſmael, becauſe we had been appriſed, that in general they are inſolent, and often conceal treachery under the garb of hoſpitality. The women, on a ſign made by the old man, hid their faces in their robes. When they approached us, they began to aſk us for powder and ſhot; and, on our telling them that we had none, they did not heſitate to ſearch us; but they ſhewed ſuch a deſire for getting poſſeſſion of our guns, and of every thing elſe about us, that we prudently thought proper to get away. Some followed us even to the boat, and attempted to take away the ſails.

Theſe Arabs lead the ſame kind of life as their anceſtors.

They

They pitch their tents ſometimes in one place, ſometimes in another, and lead their flocks from paſture to paſture. When the graſs begins to fail in the places they have choſen, they immediately quit them, and go in ſearch of others. They look with contempt upon us, who, as they ſay, are ſervile enough to cultivate the earth, and to live encloſed between four walls as in a priſon. Their amuſements conſiſt only in riding, hunting, ſmoking, and ſleeping: they live wholly on mutton and milk, and are unacquainted with either bread or wine. Though the food of the Arabs appears to be both plain and wholeſome, they are very lean; they are however ſtrong, robuſt, and well enough made, but a little ſun-burnt. Freed from the yoke of cuſtom and prejudice, they conſult only their intereſt or caprice. Each individual is a king in his own family, and enjoys every pleaſure that eaſe and liberty are capable of beſtowing.

The ſole riches of the Arabs conſiſt in camels and flocks: ſo that, in deſcribing a rich man, they ſay he poſſeſſes ſo many camels, ſo many ſheep, &c.

Their habitations conſiſt only of a tent made of goat's hair, wove ſo cloſely that neither ſun nor rain can penetrate it. Their form is oblong, and very much reſembles the keel of a ſhip turned upwards. The ancients called theſe tents *mapalia*. We may learn from a paſſage of Salluſt, that theſe tents are the ſame now as they were in his time: "*Edificia* "*Numidarum quæ mapalia illi vocant oblonga incurvis lateribus* "*tecta quaſi navium carinæ ſunt.*" They are of different ſizes, and

and are uſually ſupported by one ſtake only, though ſome of them have two or three. Theſe ſtakes are eight or nine feet high, and four or five inches thick, and have hooks all round them, on which are hung baſkets, ſaddles, and arms. The tent is divided by a cloth into two parts: it contains neither beds, mattreſſes, nor pillows; for theſe people wrap themſelves up in their robes, and either ſleep upon the bare earth, or upon a mat. One part of the tent is appropriated to the uſe of thoſe who are married; the reſt lie promiſcuouſly together.

The women ſpin and weave wool, make their tents, ſaddle their horſes, clean their arms, and, in ſhort, do every thing without complaining of their ſituation. The old Arab's wife, whom I ſpoke of, was working under the ſcorching heat, while the huſband ſat in his tent enjoying the cool breeze.

LETTER XLVIII.

Tripoli, July 17, 1789.

WE met with nothing remarkable on our way thither, but the Ara Ægimori, the Ara Philenorum, Cape Good, the Promontory of Mercury, and the view exhibited by Tripoli, which increaſes in beauty as you draw nearer to it. This town is ſituated on the borders of the ſea, at the foot of an immenſe foreſt of palm-trees.

The kingdom of Tripoli, ſo called from having formerly had under its juriſdiction the three great towns of *Sabrata*, *Oea*, and *Leptis Magna*, is neither ſo populous nor ſo rich as Tunis. Tripoli, the capital, is built upon the ſpot where formerly ſtood the ancient Abrotonum, and is ſurrounded with good fortifications. The houſes are built of brick and ſtone, and are but one ſtory high: they are white-waſhed; and this, added to the duſt and rubbiſh with which the ſtreets are filled, occaſions the greater part of the inhabitants to have ſore eyes; a complaint very prevalent among the Tuniſians, owing to the ſame cauſe. The gates of this place are arched, and ſo ſmall that it is neceſſary to ſtoop in order to get through

them; a cuſtom eſtabliſhed to render the paſſage more difficult in the time of an inſurrection.

At the entrance into the city is a triumphal monument of the Compoſite order, which, according to the inſcription, ſeems to have been erected in honour of Marcus Aurelius and his colleague, on account of the victory which the latter obtained over the Armenians. The flowers, vine leaves, and trophies are in good preſervation; but the ſtatues, which were in the niches, have been deſtroyed; and the rage of ſuperſtition has mutilated the four buſts placed above them, as well as all the figures in bas-relief. On that ſide of the arch, however, which contains the inſcription, is an upright figure by the ſide of a woman ſitting, and ſurrounded by little children, the drapery of which is perfectly entire. Some of the pieces of marble, of which this monument is compoſed, are of an enormous ſize. On account of the great heat, I was not able to copy what remains of the inſcription.

Some of the Tripolitans, perceiving that we looked attentively at this monument, began to examine it alſo themſelves; and one of them even extended his curioſity ſo far as to aſk us, at what period the infidels had erected it.

The Franks enjoy privileges here, of very great importance in a country where the populace are under ſo little ſubordination. For example, if one of them happen to have been inſulted, he has the right of cauſing the offender to be arreſted by one of the janiſſaries belonging to the conſul of his nation, and taken before a judge. There are conſuls here from

France,

France, England, Holland, Denmark, Spain, Venice, and Naples.

There are neither wells nor fountains in this place; and notwithſtanding every precaution that can be taken to preſerve the rain water, it often happens, in dry ſeaſons, that none of it is to be found.

Roman and African medals, both of ſilver and copper, are found in this country: we purchaſed ſome copper ones, which have a horſe's head on one ſide, with a palm-tree and dates on the other.

We yeſterday paid a viſit to the dey, who did us the honour to give us a particular audience in a ſpacious ſaloon. A great number of perſons, among whom the moſt conſpicuous was his own ſon, were ſtanding before him, while a ſlave with a large fan made of ſwan's feathers cooled the air, and drove the flies from him. He was armed with piſtols and poniards. You would naturally ſuppoſe, that the firſt compliment was made by the conſul. But this was not the caſe; a janiſſary, ſtepping before the company, advanced towards the dey, and, after kiſſing his hands, ſpoke a few words to him. The bey at laſt deſired us to be ſeated; and ſoon after ſome ſlaves ſpread large pieces of muſlin fringed with gold upon our knees, and brought us coffee, and various ſorts of *ſcerbet*. One of the ſlaves then poured roſe-water over us, whilſt another perfumed us with myrrh and aloes—all the while making ſeveral inclinations of the head.

The ſon of the bey having expreſſed a wiſh to ſee our frigate, a council was held to determine whether this proceeding was conſiſtent with his dignity; but it being obſerved, that neither his father nor grandfather had ever been on board a foreign ſhip of war, it was decided in the negative.

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LETTER XLIX.

Porto Farina, July 26, 1789.

A CONTRARY wind has obliged us to put into this port, from which we can ſee the *Caſtra Corneliana* and Utica, or at leaſt ſome of its ruins.

The village is ſituated at the foot of a mountain at the mouth of the river *Me-joida*, anciently *Bagrada*, oppoſite to Carthage. It was on the banks of this river that a prodigous ſerpent, one hundred and twenty feet in length, haraſſed the army of Regulus ſo much, that the ſoldiers, unable to pierce it with their arms, were obliged to have recourſe to their baliſtas (or engines) to kill it.

The houſes are of the ſame kind as thoſe of Tunis, except that they are ſmaller. The arſenal and mole are worthy of notice. There are two corvettes here on the ſtocks, one of eighteen, and the other of twenty-four guns, both conſtructed by an Italian. The port is full of galleys and galliots.

The governor preſſed us ſo earneſtly to go to ſee his garden that we at length went, attended by an Engliſh renegado. We ſaw nothing in it but a great number of fruit-trees planted

in

in a vineyard without any order. The gardener conducted us into a ſort of pavilion, ſituated in the middle of a flower-garden, and ſurrounded with thick buſhy trees, and treated us with a baſket of excellent fruit. A little way from us, a camel was very gravely turning the wheel of a well, which ſerved to water the garden. The renegado here related to us ſome of the events of his life. Having been obliged to abjure his religion, he was appointed to the command of a ſmall ſhip of war. Immediately after, he fell into the hands of the Malteſe; and to avoid the cruelties to which the over pious knights of St. John doom their ſlaves, he abjured Mahomet; and, on his return hither, again renounced Jeſus Chriſt. He has lately married the governor's daughter, and poſſeſſes ſome landed property: he ſays, that if he had a ſum of money at his diſpoſal, he might, perhaps, be tempted to return to his own country; but as that is not likely to happen, he has given up all thoughts of it.

When we came out of the garden, we returned to the village, and entered a coffee-houſe, to reſt ourſelves, and to avoid the heat, which was exceſſive. Here we ſaw ſeveral perſons playing at cheſs, a ſort of game very much in vogue in theſe countries. The coffee-houſe is of an oblong form, and is furniſhed with a high alcove covered with mats: the roof is ſupported by two rows of pillars.

On our return to the governor's houſe we found a man bound with cords, who had been apprehended as an adulterer, having been ſeen to come out of a woman's houſe; for no other

other proof of guilt is neceſſary here. He was condemned to the galleys for a year; and the woman, who came to plead her own cauſe, eſcaped for ſix months impriſonment. "You ſee," ſaid a little humpbacked man, who explained to me, in Italian, what had paſſed, "that the Barbarians are not ſo rigid on this head as formerly; they now think, with the Marquis of Beccara, that the puniſhment ſhould be proportioned to the crime." This ſpeech from the mouth of a Turk aſtoniſhed me. "You—how—who—I know what you mean; but your ſurpriſe will ceaſe when you know who I am. Know, then, that I am a Neapolitan; that I exerciſed in my own country the trade of *paglietta;* and that I have been obliged, from circumſtances, to aſſume the turban. My name is Selim; and I am ſecretary of the arſenal."—"But how do you like your new trade?" "Very well. Here I command three hundred galley ſlaves; and at home I was under every one's controul. I am ſometimes dejected, but was ſo in my own country."—"Do you ever expect to ſee it again?" "No: I might eſcape from this country; but what ſhould I do at home? Subject myſelf to the reproaches of people who do not care for me; and who, perhaps, might take it into their heads to treat me with contempt."—"But are you really perſuaded of the truth of the Mahommedan religion?" "At leaſt as well as I was of that which I have renounced."

LETTER L.

Toulon, September 2, 1789.

WE left Porto Farina in calm weather, and ſtopped ſome hours at an inhabited iſland called *Galita*, the ancient *Dracontia*, on the coaſt of Tunis. In this iſland there is a place where excellent freſh water may be procured, and it abounds alſo with wild goats. The Neapolitans and Malteſe go thither to fiſh, and to gather coral, under convoy of the Malteſe galleys.

We are at length arrived in this port, where we have performed twenty-five days quarantine. It may be proper to inform you, that the people would not ſuffer us to depart till they had perfumed us four times.

The neighbouring country is delightful. An infinite chain of hills and mounts, as varied in their ſhape as their productions, form pictureſque views on every ſide.

I ſhall not enlarge on the ſize or commodiouſneſs of the port, as I am not able to ſay any thing new on the ſubject.

The power of France is in part exhibited at Toulon: there are now in the baſon eighteen large ſhips of the line, above all which riſes, in proud pre-eminence, the Commerce of Marſeilles, of one hundred and twenty guns.

As

As foreigners are not permitted to ſee the arſenal, I am deprived of the pleaſure of ſaying any thing to you on that ſubject.

The quay is well paved; and the awnings ſpread by the tradeſmen to ſhelter their ſhops from the heat of the ſun, make it pleaſant to walk on it.

Among the fine buildings may be reckoned the marine hoſpital and the town-hall; in the latter, the two ends, which ſupport the balcony, are the work of the famous Puget.

The country here abounds with all ſorts of vegetables, and the moſt exquiſite fruits; and the market is conſtantly filled with different ſorts of fiſh.

There is a ſilk and cotton manufactory here, the productions of which are ſold very cheap. The population of Toulon may amount to 30,000 ſouls.

LETTER LI.

Marſeilles, September 6, 1789.

WE came hither by land. The way is very pleaſant along roads formed by human labour through the mountains. In the courſe of our journey we found well built villages reſembling towns, and obſerved almoſt at every ſtep little hills planted with olives and vines, orchards and gardens, in the embelliſhment of which, nature ſeems to have vied with art.

Marſeilles forms an amphitheatre round a port cut out in the ſolid rock by the hand of nature. It is of an oval figure; and there are commonly three or four hundred veſſels in it, which import productions from every part of the world. The quay is ſpacious, and is paved with large pebbles.

The ſhips which come from the Levant perform quarantine in a ſmall iſland ſome diſtance from the port. After remaining there thirty days, they unload their cargoes, which are conveyed to warehouſes ſituated without the town: they then enter the port, where they remain ten days; and it is not till after twenty days more that their merchandiſe is allowed to be introduced into the city. Marſeilles cannot take

too

too many precautions againſt a calamity, to which it has ſo often been a victim.

It is well known that the Phœnicians built this town, formerly celebrated for its marble and buildings. At the preſent day ſome magnificence is conſpicuous in the *Ville Neuve* and the *Quartier Neuf;* the ſtreets are wide, regular, and well paved, and the buildings are in a pretty good ſtyle of architecture. The *Cours*, which is here the moſt frequented promenade, is nothing but a long and wide ſtreet ornamented with two rows of trees, and has nothing remarkable in it but the great number of people who conſtantly reſort to it.

The objects moſt worthy of notice here, are the ſugar refineries, the manufactories of ſtuffs, gold, ſilk, ſoap, &c.

There is here an academy of belles lettres, and a periodical concert, to which foreigners are admitted gratis.

This is the country for good liqueurs, perfumes, eſſences, ſyrups, and ſweetmeats.

LETTER LII.

Leghorn, September 14, 1789.

WE are now in one of the richeſt ports of the Mediterranean. There are here ſeveral Engliſh, Greek, and Armenian commercial houſes. As to the Jews, they are ſo much reſpected in this place, that the proverb ſays, *You had better ſtrike the grand duke than a Jew.* This is a free port; and that, without doubt, is the reaſon why commerce flouriſhes. The Genoeſe muſt have often repented that they gave up this town to Coſmo I. for I know not what inſignificant village.

The ſtreets are wide, and well paved; and the police ſo ſtrict, that a man may ſafely walk through them at midnight with his hands full of gold. There are here fine buildings; and the *via grande* is ornamented with large and rich ſhops.

The ſtatue of Coſmo I. which is in the arſenal, does not deſerve much notice; but this is not the caſe with the four Barbarians in bronze, chained at his feet. This poſition is natural; their countenances are ſo ſtrongly expreſſive of grief and deſpair, that they appear to be really animated. In a corner

a corner at a little diſtance from this ſtatue, are two ſuperb baſons of granite.

The inhabitants of this place being all engaged in commerce, the ſciences are neglected, and no other arts are cultivated than thoſe which relate to navigation.

All the bookſellers are printers; *Maſi*, who has made a choice collection of the Italian poets, has a ſuperb printing-houſe. He is at preſent engaged in making a beautiful and correct edition of Boccace; and he propoſes afterwards to print all the authors who have written in the ſame ſtyle. He publiſhes a tranſlation of ſeveral journals of the national aſſembly. The avidity with which theſe are bought up, announces a revolution, which may poſſibly not prove favourable to the intereſts of the grand duke.

This fertile country is not yet freed from ſuperſtition, of which I ſhall give you two ſtriking examples. Every bookſeller to whom I have applied, refuſed to ſell me, at any price, a tranſlation of Lucretius, by the celebrated Marchetti, telling me that it was forbidden by the pope. An able artiſt called *Lapi*, having engraved a Venus of Titian, thought it too licentious; and that the only way to expiate ſo great a crime was to deſtroy his plate, which he did not heſitate to do.

Here, as throughout all Tuſcany, the ladies wear white; for, according to their mode of thinking, lively colours are fit only for peaſants. Some of them, I am told, in order to make this favourite colour more natural to them, frequently bleed

bleed themſelves, which occaſions them to look very white and pale; and they are then the more admired.

A huſband here never attends his wife to church, the theatre, or other public places, for he would be pointed at if he did.

The country girls are pretty enough; and their ſmall ſtraw hats inclining a little to one ſide, give them a grace and an air of coquetry which correſpond admirably with their pictureſque dreſs. It is ſurpriſing not to ſee any courteſans in ſo populous and commercial a country. I am ignorant of the motives which can influence the government to eſtabliſh a police ſo deſtructive to the tranquillity of mothers and huſbands.

The population of this town may amount to fifty thouſand ſouls, including fifteen thouſand Jews.

LETTER LIII.

Sardinia, October 7, 1789.

AFTER coaſting round *Gorgona*, *Elba*, and *Corſica*, we came to an anchor on the north of this iſland, in the gulf of *Alrachena*. Whilſt the boats were hoiſting out, we heard the firing of muſketry. This proceeded from the inhabitants, who, poſted in bodies upon different hills, were firing at our veſſel. We landed in order to know the reaſon of this proceeding, and I was appointed interpreter on the occaſion, though, to confeſs the truth, I could have wiſhed myſelf rid of the office. Seven or eight people, with arms in their hands, advanced towards us with a precipitate ſtep. One of them, who was on horſeback, aſked to what country our ſhip belonged? I replied, that it was Engliſh. He then looked with an air of ſurpriſe at his companions, who aſked in their turn, if the Engliſh were Chriſtians? We replied in the affirmative, and invited them on board to dinner; but it was not till after long deliberation that they accepted our offer. We then aſked them, why they fired upon us? "To make you come aſhore, in order that we might know to what country your veſſel

veſſel belonged." "Why are you all armed?" "To prevent foreigners from landing againſt our will; and to defend our wives, our children, and flocks."

We landed in ſearch of game; and though they told us that there were partridges, hares, deer, and wild boars, we found none of any kind. We went through ſome wretched villages, whoſe inhabitants ſeemed as frightful, and as well armed as thoſe who came on board of us.

The air of this place is very unwholeſome, on which account the people in general are wan. They ſuffer their beards to grow, wear a red cap, and are clothed in a black felt doublet covered with a ſort of cuiraſs of ſtag's hide, which laces over the breaſt, and reaches below the knee. Their breeches and boots are of the ſame materials; and a belt, from which hangs a long ſtiletto, is faſtened round their body.

Their mode of living is quite unreſtrained. They apply to no ſort of labour, not even to agriculture, and live wholly upon milk and game. They agree very ill together, and their quarrels almoſt always have a tragical end. The murderer eſcapes by quitting his little town and joining the banditti, with whom he remains till he can obtain his pardon from the relations of the deceaſed. Theſe people recogniſe ſo ſlightly the rights of the king, that they often make war upon his officers, who in their turn maſſacre them, or ſeize their flocks, and burn their habitations.

A contrary wind obliged us to coaſt round this iſland, and

to

to anchor in various bays. In the ſmall iſland of *Magdalena* we met with ſeveral Neapolitan barks fiſhing for coral. At *Tolara*, a high rock, which loſes itſelf in the clouds, and which the ancients called *Inſula Mercurii*, we killed ſome wild goats, and took in freſh water. We were informed that the people of Barbary reſort hither for the ſame purpoſe.

At Oleaſtro the air is equally unhealthy; but the inhabitants are not ſo ſavage nor ſo miſerable; for they attend to cultivation. At *Oriſtan* the inhabitants are humane, complaiſant to foreigners, and live very comfortably. We found there poultry, excellent millers, and very good bread. On the borders of the ſea, are the ruins of an ancient town. A ſoldier made us a preſent of a Carthaginian medal, which he had found in theſe ruins.

I hardly need inform you that the marſhes, with which this country abounds, have always infected the air. Pauſanias aſcribes the bad air to the ſalt of theſe marſhes, and to an impetuous ſouth wind which prevails in the country.

The ancients make mention of an herb peculiar to this iſland, which occaſions death by laughter; from whence it is called the *Sardonic laugh*, an expreſſion ſo ancient, that it is even to be met with in Homer. This herb grew in the neighbourhood of ſprings, without however infecting the water.

We are about to depart for England, whence you will hear from me. Adieu!

FINIS.

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